The Church of the Redeemer

Memorial

Minneapolis

1866 - 1891

J. N. Tuttle

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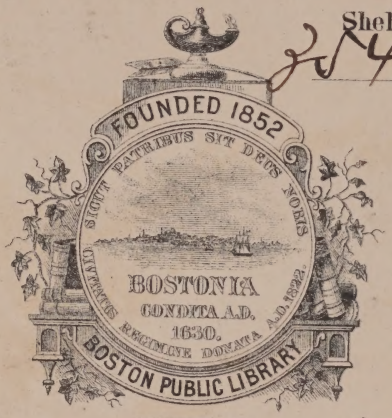

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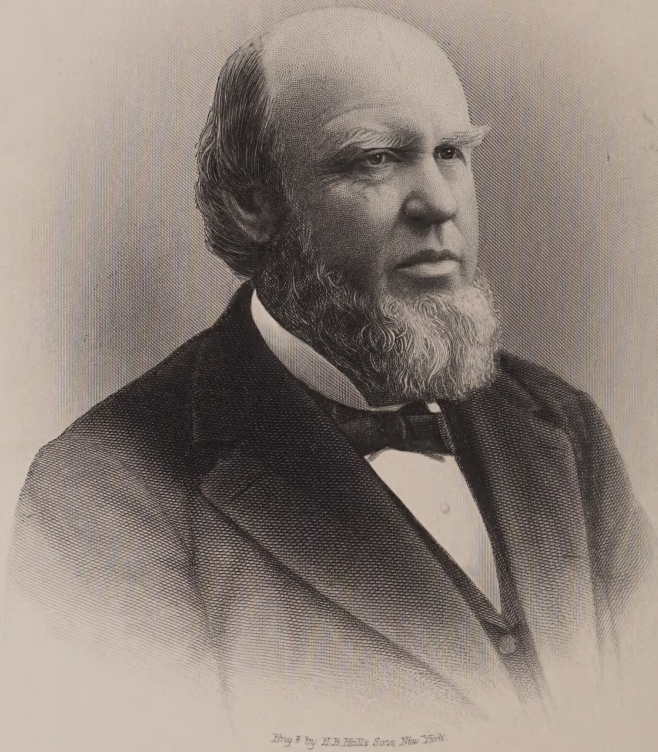

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Yours truly,
J. W. Fuller.

THE FIELD AND THE FRUIT:

A Memorial

OF

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS' MINISTRY

WITH THE

CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER,

MINNEAPOLIS.

BY

REV. JAMES H. TUTTLE, D.D.

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This Volume is affectionately Dedicated

TO

THE CONGREGATION AND MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH
OF THE REDEEMER, MINNEAPOLIS,

BY J. H. TUTTLE,

AT THE CLOSE OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR
OF HIS PASTORATE

(1866—1891).

CONTENTS.

PAGE

Epistolary Preface 7

Historical.

Minneapolis and the Church of the Redeemer . . 17

A Cluster of Tributes.

Dr. Tuttle in Minneapolis 45

Reminiscences of the Chicago Ministry 50

Dr. Tuttle's Rochester Ministry 60

Twelve Sermons.

I. Beauty for Ashes 67

II. God's Fellow-Laborers 100

III. Over, Under, Round, and Through the World 124

IV. In the Midst of Ruins, but not Ruined . 147

V. Down Growing and Upward Fruiting . . . 178

VI. The Lord's Mirror 204

VII. Judgment and Victory 230

VIII. Our Dwelling-Place 252

IX. Belief and Unbelief 273

X. The Ninety and Nine 294

XI. The Third Heaven 317

XII. Communion Sermon 343

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

PAGE

I. Rev. J. H. Tuttle, D.D. . . . . *Frontispiece*

II. Church of the Redeemer after the Fire of 1888 30

III. The Church as Rebuilt in 1889 36

IV. The Baptismal Marble Font 41

(A copy of Thorwaldsen's "Angel Font," presented by the Pastor as a memorial of the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of his Pastorate.)

EPISTOLARY PREFACE.

To the Congregation and Members
of the Church of the Redeemer :

My dear Friends, — My first sermon was preached in Minneapolis, on the first Sunday in July, 1866. The Trustees invited me to come and spend the summer only, but before this time expired I was engaged to assume the pastorate of the Church for "one year." For reasons never made known to me, and without a single official word since about continuing or breaking off my relations, the "one year" has been extended to twenty-five years.

The termination of the quarter-of-a-century I have lived in your midst has suggested the publication of this volume of Memorial Sermons. You will recognize them, and to the extent that you remember them they will recall occasions when we worshipped together in the house of the Lord.

The sermons do not appear in the exact order and form in which they were delivered. In preparing them for publication I have changed some sentences, erased some, and corrected many. Whole paragraphs have in a few instances been added, increasing their length perhaps.

The brightest candles set in a sermon are frequently its illustrations borrowed from current events; and in reviewing my manuscripts I found that many of these lights had gone out, leaving certain spaces here and there darker than usual; that even the candlesticks were missing. I cannot in every case hope to have restored these extinguished helps. Then, too, sermons which have cooled off from their pulpit-heat and glow are as stone compared with living flesh.

Hence, though I am grateful for the opportunity to repeat my thoughts in print, I fear they may prove less worthy and less effective than they were in their original shape. I shall have but a poor chance of perpetuating myself very long among you if other well-meant efforts now dissolved into invisible history shall not, through your gracious charity, obtain for me a more enduring recollection than is promised through these unpretentious discourses. They are nevertheless the issues of sincere convictions, and yet of convictions limited in exactness and lucidness of expression by the imperfection of language, and more by my imperfect use of it.

I have all my life accepted a creed; first, and for a little while, the Orthodox, and then the Universalist, never supposing it possible for any person to do much earnest thinking without precipitating a form of belief of some kind, long or short, positive or negative. I have less confidence however than formerly in dogmatic statements of belief; for the reason that they are apt to leave something that is important either unexpressed or wrongly expressed, and so shortening or perverting their meaning. There was never a fine

picture painted that might not just as well perhaps have been painted differently. There was never a creed written that might not, without hiding or changing its sense, have been framed in other words. And no creed ever will or can be shaped, it is presumed, that shall escape criticism or answer all the needs of progressive thought. I have more and more, as time has passed, felt the necessity of taking the chief emphasis from doctrine and placing it upon conduct.

These sermons are of course selected fruit, but from a common-bearing orchard. As they were ripened in the autumn sun of a long pulpit-experience, we cannot excuse their poor quality by the plea that they were plucked too early. If they shall seem inconsistent or illogical in any of their statements, I only ask permission to quote the following lines from Oliver Wendell Holmes: —

> "Deal gently with us, ye who read!
> Our largest hope is unfulfilled;
> The promise still outruns the deed, —
> The tower, and not the spire, we build."

Counting those first years in which I should have been preparing for the pulpit instead of daring to stand in it, my ministry has extended through almost half a century. As my feet touch the beginning of the end I naturally turn and review the past. What I see and do not see, what saddens and what gladdens, what depresses and what elates me, I have not the space to write and you have not the wish to read; and yet I should but add to my numerous shortcomings if I did not confess that my Heavenly Father has blessed

me abundantly and in many ways; blessed me with friends, with health, and strength, and hope, and courage, and years, and most of all, with a Christian faith that has made for me a warm fireside in the coldest days of my experience.

I ought also to confess no less gratefully, that the denomination I have but poorly served has been a living help and joy to me. It extended a warm welcome to me when, turning lonely and sorrowfully away from the Church of my early youth, I went and knocked timidly at its door. It has given me its sympathy and confidence always, it has laid unearned honor on me, it has done for me, not more than I desired and tried to do for it, but more than I could do. I shall die in its debt. But there is comfort in Browning's doctrine that

> "'T is not what man does that exalts him, but what man would do."

I have had five settlements in all: the first at Richfield Springs, N. Y., then at Fulton, N. Y., then at Rochester, N. Y., then at Chicago, Ill., and finally at Minneapolis. My last three pastorates cover thirty-eight years. No minister has been more fortunate in the gift of noble, generous parishes.

Half a century! What changes have happened during this period! A majority of the world's greatest inventions date within it. Compare our whole country, our North West especially, to-day, with what they were fifty years ago! What revolutions and what progress in religious thought have everywhere occurred in this space of time!

It would show that I had taken but an indifferent part in the events of these years and shared very poorly in their improvements, if I denied any growth, any changes in my own religious opinions. The theological agitations we all have passed through have of course shaken from me many ideas and doctrines I once entertained. Some doctrines that stood at the front of my mind have been crowded back, and others have become more prominent; some that I felt certain about have grown misty; some that were my daily bread are now a little stale and unpalatable; some that gave once only a taper's ray flame up now like electric lights. On the whole my faith seems to have gained both in bulk and quality, and to have lost little that was of any real value to it. I tread the paths of speculation more cautiously perhaps, but not less willingly and delightfully. The mysteries of life and of death have deepened, and so has my trust in their inner meaning. The certain superstitious charm which some religious forms and things had for me has vanished, in part, and I sometimes feel the want of it, and wish I could call it back again, but there is left in place of it what should be better, — a more enlightened, and therefore more solid confidence.

My faith in the peculiar doctrines of our church, extremely ardent at the beginning, has suffered neither coldness nor diminution.

The burdens assumed and laid upon me by my office have at times been heavy and wearisome, and when staggering under them almost ready to fall, I have been unable to close my lips always against complaint; but I can sincerely say that I never for a single hour,

if for a moment, regretted that I chose the ministry for my profession and the Universalist Church for my field of work.

I desire to record here, what I have endeavored to show in my preaching and conduct, though not successfully enough perhaps, that I have felt and still feel only love and respect for all other Christian sects, even those who seem most opposed to us. I would not deceive in the least my orthodox neighbors, nor myself, by smoothing over real differences to make them seem like agreements; I would not stretch the mantle of charity so far as to hide points of doctrine on either side that neither side wishes to have hidden. Honesty and disunion are better than union and dishonesty. But it has always seemed to me that the gulf between us and other denominations has been made unnecessarily deep and wide; and I cannot but hope and believe that the time shall come, and come soon, when it shall appear to even the blindest sectary that prejudice and party strife have found ten obstacles to our harmony where only one existed. However, I feel that the unamiableness likely to be engendered in each sect toward the other, has, in Minneapolis, been reduced to a minimum. Many a sweet flower has been tossed to me over the partition walls here, which I thankfully accepted as a gift from gardens in which I did no planting. These neighboring churches of which I speak and the Church of the Redeemer have lived together in great peace, because they and you have exalted brotherly love above mere sectarian interests. The charity which each invested in the other has brought large returns at last.

In Minneapolis, and with you, my dear friends, I have spent half — and the more important half — of my ministry. A pastorate of twenty-five years is not a long one, to be sure, but longer than the average. I look about in this city and find no pulpit neighbor who has held his place here more than a dozen years, and only one who has kept the same charge half of that time. Dr. Knickerbocker, the well-remembered and much-loved Rector of Gethsemane, was here more than twenty-five years, and until he was made Bishop of Indiana. You could not make a bishop of me, and so were compelled to do what was better for me, — keep me. That my stay has been drawn out to such an exceptional length, must have been owing to your exceptional patience, and I wish I had more to offer you in return than the little I have done for you, more than the unwritable thankfulness which fills and has filled my heart. I can only record here, with as much intensity of feeling and affection as I can crowd into these words, that the inexhaustible kindness and sympathy you have ever shown to me personally, to my family, and to all that has concerned me, have been, and are as fully appreciated as by my limited powers is possible. Recollections of your faithfulness to the church, of your various sacrifices for the church and for me, stream through my mind while I am writing this epistle, but I can leave but a faint witness here of the tears of gratitude the thought of you is pressing into my eyes.

The frosts that are sure to visit us all in later years may seem to you to have turned some of my thoughts and feelings into "the sere and yellow leaf;" but

there is, I would fain hope, this small compensation, —

> "In Autumn, though the trees are stripped and thin,
> They let the sun and cheerful daylight in;
> Through the bare boughs the heavens are smiling clear,
> And distant views long lost again draw near."

Or if the snows I wear indicate that even the Winter is upon me, let me assure you that it is yet Summer in my heart, in my Christian faith, and in my love for you.

The years left to me, whether they be few or more, I hope to enjoy here in sight of the spire of the Church of the Redeemer.

The mark when drawn across my official relation with you shall not, I trust, cancel any of our mutual affections and interests. I shall claim still my old place in your hearts and at your firesides. My life has taken so deep a root among you that transplanting now would destroy me.

I love life, and will be thankful to my Heavenly Father for as much more of it as He shall be pleased to give me; for as much more as I can make useful to my friends and to myself.

But the flax on the distaff is lessening and the thread will soon be spun, even if Atropos' shears do not hasten the end.

J. H. Tuttle.

HISTORICAL.

MINNEAPOLIS AND THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER.

REV. SETH BARNES, a Universalist Clergyman, a native of Connecticut, but for many years a resident in the West, — in Chicago, for a time; editor for a while of a religious paper called "The Better Covenant," published in Rockford, Ill., — finally moved northward to Jefferson, Wis., and then to St. Anthony, Minn., where he settled in 1855. Minnesota was then a Territory. It was made a State in 1858. St. Anthony, though still a village in size, rose to the dignity of a city in 1855. The country around was in almost its native wildness. Indians were roaming about everywhere. Buffaloes were feeding on the prairies less than two hundred miles away. Minneapolis, which grew up on the opposite and west side of the Mississippi, which at last, in 1862, swallowed St. Anthony, name and all, was hardly born then. Its first streets were laid out in 1854. The picturesque suspension bridge, which spanned the river between the towns until recently, was open for travel in 1855.

Mr. Barnes was probably the first minister in fellowship with our denomination who settled in this

section, and must, therefore, be regarded as the pioneer of the cause in Minnesota. He established a society and church in St. Anthony, of which he was pastor. A fine stone church edifice, expensive for those times, was built under his ministry. He died in August, 1866. He was a man of much ability and of spotless character. His name is venerated by all who knew him. Many of the most estimable and influential families in the town were his friends and supporters. A few of these came over to the West Side after a time, where, with others who had emigrated from the East, — New York and New England, from Maine chiefly, — they became the originators of Universalism in Minneapolis.

The First Universalist Society in Minneapolis, — since named the "The Church of the Redeemer," — was founded in 1864. Some attempts at organization had been made before this. Several of our clergymen had delivered sermons here; among them Rev. W. W. King, a popular speaker, settled in Chicago for a time, and now deceased; and Rev. D. M. Reed, a most excellent man and preacher, who retired from the active ministry a dozen or more years ago, and died at Rockford, Ill., three or four years since. In the winter of 1863 and 1864, Rev. Dolphus Skinner, D.D., of Utica, N. Y., came to Minneapolis, as did the celebrated Dr. Horace Bushnell, at an earlier date, for his health. His presence in the village was soon known. He was too earnest and zealous in his profession to remain idle, though he was not physically strong; and the people, who were informed of his extraordinary pulpit powers, were unwilling to miss the opportunity of hearing him; and hence Woodman's Hall, corner of Washington

Avenue and Second Street South, was at once secured, and appointments were made for him to preach. He was then a man perhaps of sixty, tall, graceful, imposing and venerable in appearance, with a high, broad forehead, iron gray hair, plain features, and a very pleasing expressive countenance. He had a rich musical voice, and attractive manners. Our pulpit had in that day few finer orators, and no better known or more honored minister. He had not for some years been regularly settled over a parish; but his services were in constant demand in the wide region of central New York, at weddings, funerals, and public meetings. He preached to large audiences generally; to immense ones frequently. "His tongue dropped manna," and thousands fed on it. He was a great expositor of doctrines; and his opinions had the weight of gold. He could touch the heart as well as convince the intellect. He conducted an elaborate written discussion with the noted Alexander Campbell, leader in the sect known as the "Disciples of Christ." He was also for a long time editor of the "Universalist Magazine," published at Utica, N. Y. It followed naturally, therefore, that crowds should come to hear him in Minneapolis, and that his preaching awakened a deep religious interest in the community. He had wisdom and experience, and knew how to gather and to save the fruits that had ripened under his labors; and hence, calling together the most interested men and women in the congregation, he not only reorganized the society, but formed a Church, solemnly administering the rites of Baptism and the Communion.

Among the principal families connected with the congregation and society at that period were the following: Chowen, Perkins, Case, Morrison, Cornell, Eastman, Washburn, Gibson, King, Cayhill, Birge, Aldrich, Bassett, Wright, Dillingham, Lucas, Hawkins, Lewis, Wilcox, Kendall, Elliott, etc. George W. Chowen — now deceased — was clerk of the church for years. He was Register of Deeds for a time, and recorded, "the first instrument in writing that was necessary to be recorded in Hennepin County." A noble man! F. R. E. Cornell was a prominent lawyer, and a pillar of strength wherever he stood. He was a member of the Legislature for years, and Attorney-General; and was finally "elevated to a seat on the Supreme Bench, which high office he held at the time of his death." Colonel Aldrich was an ex-member of Congress. W. S. King was editor of "The Atlas" in Minneapolis, in 1859. He was many years later elected to Congress.

From this providential and solid beginning the church advanced and prospered. The enrolled members were few, but they had faith and were in earnest. They gratefully appreciated Dr. Skinner's sermons and work among them. "Father Skinner" they more often called him. Young and old looked up to him with love and veneration. His noble example and good counsel continued their influence long after he had left; and are even yet affectionately remembered. Among the blessings which God has bestowed on the Church of the Redeemer, not the least were given in the dawn of its history, through that great and good man, Dr. Skinner. He died in 1869.

The first pastor of the church, Rev. J. W. Keyes, had his first pastorate here. He was young, and fresh from the Theological School, at Canton, N. Y., — a school that has sent out, and is sending out, many useful young men into the ministry. Dr. E. Fisher was then, and Dr. I. M. Atwood is now, president of this institution. Mr. Keyes found and married his wife, Miss Cooper, in Minneapolis. His ministry was short, only two years, but it was successful. He added several names to the church; and was permitted, before he resigned, to see a church-building started on the corner of Fifth Street and Fourth Avenue South. He afterwards settled at Pawtucket, R. I. He had always a slender constitution, and did not live long. He was a devoted, excellent preacher, and highly esteemed.

The writer of this sketch was invited to the pastorate of the church in the summer of 1866. It may be mentioned as a somewhat singular coincidence, that I should have been called to take up the work so auspiciously begun by Dr. Skinner; as he was one of the first Universalist ministers I saw and heard and heard about in my youth; and we had been for long years warm and almost intimate friends. He officiated at my marriage. He preached the sermon at the funeral of my father, and of one of my sisters. So the church seemed, and still seems, dearer to me because he laid his hand on it and blessed it. He "planted;" those who followed "watered;" "but God gave the increase."

In 1866 Minneapolis was but a village. It was incorporated as a city the following year, with Dorilus

Morrison, the chairman of our church trustees, as its first mayor. Our only railroad then had its termini at St. Paul and St. Cloud. The first railroad from the South, and the beginning of the vast system of roads now centring here and in St. Paul, was completed in 1866.

Our meetings had been held and were being held in Harrison Hall, corner of Nicollet and Washington Avenues, South. The audiences were small, but they contained the nucleus of our present large assemblages; and many of the faces which appeared in that humbler place of worship are familiar in our congregation to-day; though there have been great changes, of course.

The church edifice spoken of was dedicated in October, 1866. Rev. D. M. Reed, of Illinois, whose noble ability and character have been referred to, preached the sermon; and Rev. Sumner Ellis assisted in the services. This new wooden temple would seem humble enough now doubtless, but it was worth the much enthusiastic pride we took in it then. It was centrally located, convenient, large enough for the time, and not without architectural attractions; so we thought at least, which answered as well. It seated about four hundred, and was generally well filled, often crowded. It cost, including the furnishings, about $18,000; much more than was expected, as usual, at the start. Its walls and ceilings displayed the first piece of fresco work done in Minneapolis, and it elicited, as it merited, considerable praise.

W. D. Washburn, with a generosity that was gratefully appreciated by the congregation, placed a hand-

some Boston-made organ — the first large organ that had appeared in town — in the choir. The first fingers that touched the keys of this instrument, on the Sabbath, at least, belonged to a highly cultivated young gentleman, Mr. Leeds, from New England, whose lungs were fatally affected, and who, like many others in a similar condition, had come to test the healing qualities of our Minnesota air which was much talked about, and widely recommended. He was, poor fellow, already in the last stages of consumption. Climbing the stairs exhausted him, and he could hardly sit erect at the key-board. A couch was prepared for him on one of the benches in the choir where he could rest between playing. But what heavenly music his wasting fingers evoked from under those keys, and from that hidden forest of pipes! His touch was delicate and his playing wonderful; so we all felt at least. He was so far transformed into a spirit and so near the other world, that he appeared in certain moments to be listening to angelic strains and imitating them. We missed him after a little while. He had gone home to die!

Strangely enough the organist who followed him, and who remained at the instrument eleven years, Professor Charles Marsh, was originally a Boston man, who had come to Minnesota to save his weak lungs. He was a devoted New Churchman, or Swedenborgian, a true and delightful gentleman. The organ seemed to mourn, as we all did really, when death summoned him from it.

The choir during these years was composed entirely of volunteers. Some of its members were the follow-

ing: Dr. Bowman, A. B. Barton, Mr. and Mrs. Hawkins, Mrs. Gibson, and Mrs. Chowen. We cannot say when the fashion of paying the choir began; as soon probably as the ability to pay was acquired.

If we were not as rich then as now we felt as rich. We were at least a happy people; have we ever at any time since been happier? We were united, as we have continued to be. The history of our lives in that place, and in those years, is written in our hearts, but only a fragment of it can be transcribed to these pages. I turn to that chapter in our church experiences, deeply grateful that it was filled so full of God's goodness and our joy.

During the year between September 1873 and 1874, the pastor of the church was absent in Europe. The pulpit was at first supplied by Rev. Moses Goodrich, of Anoka, Minn., one of the pioneers in the State, a native of New York, a noble-spirited, self-sacrificing man, with many friends and no enemies. He died in 1880. The trustees, learning that Rev. Moses Marston, professor of Greek and Latin in St. Lawrence University, Canton, N. Y., desired to come west for his health, invited him to occupy the pulpit the rest of the term. His gentle, scholarly manner and rare amiability of character at once won for him a place in the hearts of the people. Paris Gibson, one of the trustees, was also one of the Regents of the State University, located in Minneapolis, and partly through his influence, Mr. Marston — he was usually called "Prof. Marston" — was elected to a professorship in that institution, which place he held until his death, in July, 1883. The St. Lawrence University conferred upon him the

title of Ph.D. He was more than highly esteemed in the Minnesota State University, — he was sincerely loved by the faculty and students.

To show how his name was and is still honored there, it should be stated that a movement was made a year ago, which has been successful, to establish in the University a scholarship to be forever known as the "Marston Scholarship," in English, the proceeds of the perpetual fund — one thousand dollars — to be devoted as a prize to the best student in that department. The University and the church mourned his loss.

We remained on Fifth Street eight years, until 1874. The church was then sold to the German Methodists, — it has since perished by fire, — and we, bidding it an affectionate farewell, moved into the vestry of the unfinished stone church, corner of Eighth Street and Second Avenue South, where we now are. The foundations of this noble structure were laid in 1872; it was dedicated on Sunday morning, July 10, 1876. Dr. A. A. Miner of Boston preached the dedicatory sermon; Dr. Robert Collyer, Unitarian, then of Chicago, now of New York, offered the Invocation; Dr. George H. Deere, then of Rochester, Minn., now of Riverside, Cal., made the dedicatory prayer. Dr. Collyer preached at 3 o'clock, P. M., and Dr. Sumner Ellis, whom I have spoken of as being present ten years before, at the dedication of the old church, preached in the evening; he also read the Scripture lesson in the morning.

This was a day to be remembered by the Church of the Redeemer. Dr. Miner, then and now one of America's greatest theologians and preachers, never rose to

a greater height perhaps than on this occasion. His text was from 1st Corinthians xii. 27: "Now are ye the body of Christ, and members in particular." His theme was the "Unity of the Human Race" present and future. He spoke as usual without notes. His magnificent figure, as he stood out from the pulpit, and lifted his hands in graceful gestures, was extremely imposing. He reminded one, in looks, and manner, and speech, of Wendell Phillips. He built up an argument of stupendous proportions and overwhelming power. His faultless logic and persuasive eloquence held the immense audience for more than an hour, in wondering captivity. The "Pioneer Press" began its account of the sermon in these words: "We scarcely dare attempt even a synopsis of the excellent discourse. In common with that vast audience, the reporter was lost to everything save the eloquent speaker and his theme, and his pencil forgot its duty until the last word was spoken."

On Monday evening, Dr. Miner from the same pulpit for two hours addressed an audience nearly as large, seated in a melting atmosphere, on the subject of Temperance! This lecture was not, as is often the case, sustained by enlivening anecdotes and rhetorical pyrotechnics chiefly, but by pure, solid reasoning; and yet the interest of the congregation, raised to a high mark at the beginning, did not flag for an instant nor complain of weariness. The sermon and the lecture are remembered and talked about and complimented to this day.

Dr. Collyer's sermon was characteristic. His text was from Romans viii. 30: "Moreover, whom he

did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." No other minister on earth preaches like Robert Collyer, and few ministers preach as well. The old masters would have loved to paint his genial face as this generation loves to look at it. He is broad in his shoulders and in his religion. He has made thousands better and happier.

Dr. Ellis's text in the evening was from the 145th Psalm: "I will extol thee, my God, O King!" The sermon was able and scholarly. As a literary production it was remarkable. Dr. Ellis was never on any occasion an impassioned speaker. But what he said was like himself, clear, refined, classical. Dr. Deere's presence and prayer in the morning helped to round the occasion into fulness. We could have had no worthier pleader before the throne of grace for dedication blessings. Miner, Collyer, Ellis, Deere, side by side in the pulpit of the Church of the Redeemer! Who of us will ever forget the picture? One figure in it, Dr. Ellis, was too soon removed from earth.

The following is quoted from the "Pioneer Press" in regard to this occasion: —

"A fairer day than last Sunday never smiled on God's green earth. A trifle warm perhaps, but the sky was cloudless, and the blazing orb of day rode through the heavens in majestic splendor, while all Nature beamed with joy and gratitude. Minneapolis is a church-going city and houses of worship are numerous, but on Sunday the chief attraction seemed to be the Church of the Redeemer. The church was filled to overflowing. Hundreds went away unable to gain the privilege of standing or of getting within hearing distance. It was such

an outpouring of the religious community as we do not remember to have witnessed before in this city. The floral decorations, while in excellent taste, were not profuse. In the lower vestibule was a handsome stand of ferns arranged by Mrs. O. A. Pray; in the upper a pyramid of rare and fragrant flowers, the gift of George A. Brackett; in front of the pulpit platform was a Memorial Tablet marked 'H. M. T.' on a bed of moss fringed with roses, an offering of Mrs. Paris Gibson."

The general style of the church was Gothic. A more harmonious, perfect specimen of architecture did not then exist in the Northwest, nor in the whole country, perhaps. Exteriorly and interiorly it presented a combination of forms and colors almost faultless. The symmetrical spire rising two hundred and twelve feet from the ground, and still standing, was especially admired. Occasionally these favorable opinions were varied with the reasonable objection that the walls of the church, outside particularly, were too short for their great height.

The cost of the church was between $80,000 and $90,000. The building committee were W. W. Eastman, O. A. Pray, A. B. Barton, Rufus Stevens. The trustees were D. Morrison, W. D. Washburn, O. A. Pray, A. B. Barton, C. B. Bushnell. The clerk was James C. Tuttle. The largest contributors to the above formidable sum — formidable for that day — were D. Morrison, W. D. Washburn, W. W. Eastman, W. S. King, O. M. Loring, O. A. Pray, Frank Gilson, F. R. E. Cornell, A. B. Barton, A. B. Rand, Thomas Lowry, George B. Wright, E. W. Herrick, L. Day, N. Thompson, George W. Chowen.

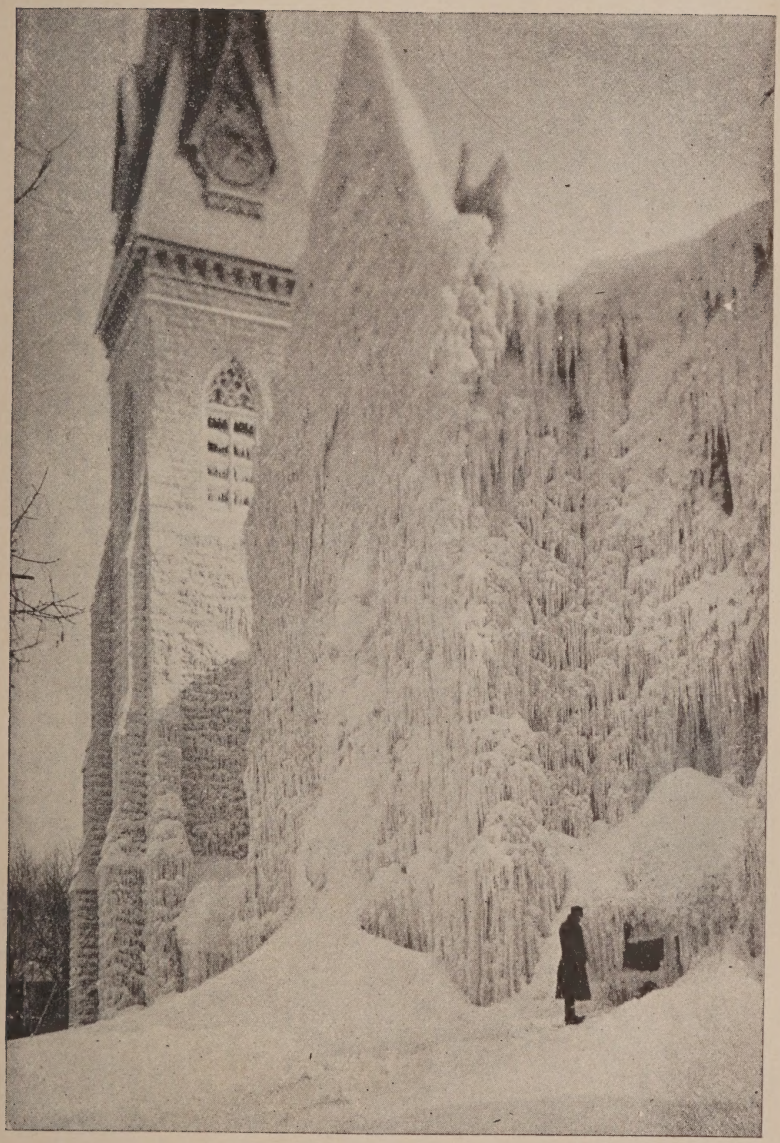
The mention of these few names among the donors must not be considered disparaging to the numerous others who gave as much compared with what they had to give. The whole congregation generously united in making the sacrifices necessary to so great an end. Those who could not give gold and silver gave work, and time, and love.

The congregation continued to worship in this handsome temple for twelve years. Death threw its shadow over us from time to time. Loved ones and helpful ones dropped out of the pews, leaving to us aching hearts, but the comforting memory also of their life and faith. Aside from this the first great calamity that fell upon us was the sudden destruction of the church edifice by fire. This sad event occurred on Sunday morning, January 15th, 1888.

It was one of the coldest of Minnesota's cold days. Thick snow lay on the earth. The sun shone clear, as it usually does in such weather, but through an atmosphere that seemed to congeal its beams. The chimneys over thousands of newly-lighted grates and furnaces sent up straight columns of smoke. The alarm was given about eight o'clock. The fire originated in the walls of the vestry, in a mysterious manner and in an unapproachable place. The firemen were on the ground promptly and exerted all their strength and skill, but without avail. The flames advanced slowly, but so securely behind ramparts of stone and plaster as to escape the pouring floods from the hose; indeed these floods froze immediately into masses of ice. Smoke rolled in clouds from all the windows. No one, not even the intrepid firemen, could cross the

threshold of any door. For a long time not a single blaze nor a red spark was to be seen anywhere. Finally the smouldering sea of heat rose higher and higher, and flames shot out of the roof. Then firemen and all lost heart. The roof fell crashing down through the floors and vestry-room into the cellar basement and on to the five wood-furnaces, some of which at least had been kindled for the day. The great tower and spire stood through it all, calm and silent and unhurt. It could hardly be seen, however, at times through banks of soot and smoke and whirling cinders. The chime of nine bells — a gift from W. D. Washburn — hung motionless and never moved their tongues in alarm. The tower-clock moved its faithful hands around as usual and struck every hour, sounding out solemnly through the dark tempest raving about it, until 4 o'clock, P.M., when, choked with frost, it stopped.

Hundreds braved the bitter air, and came and stood and watched the progress of the fire. Many of our people came to church as usual, knowing nothing of the fire until they reached the spot. For the first time they were denied an entrance to their own church-door! Their disappointment and sorrow may be imagined. Scarcely anything was saved. A few pictures and other articles were snatched from the vestry, and a considerable part of the Sunday school library was tossed through the window on to the snow. The pews, carpets, chairs, pulpit, communion table, organ, the beautiful and expensive "Washburn Memorial Window," were all converted into ashes! In the pastor's room, near the pulpit, the Communion-service articles were locked in an oak cabinet, and these, strangely



CHURCH AFTER THE FIRE, ROBED IN ICE.

enough, were preserved. The cabinet was charred and spoiled; but these sacred vessels, when rescued days afterwards, showed no touch of fire nor taint of smoke. They are still in use, mute memorials of the little that was left from those consuming flames.

The deep and universal sympathy shown by the people of the other churches, clergymen and laymen, did much to lighten our loss and to increase our confidence in human nature. Plymouth Congregationalist, the Centenary Methodist, and Unitarian, neighbors, at once and freely offered us the use of their churches for afternoon services, until we were able to make other arrangements. Yes, and the Jews desired to open their Tabernacle for us. The whole community extended friendly, sympathetic hands to us. The entire city mourned the loss of this grand landmark among the churches. Fortunately — wisely, we may say in reference to the prudent care the Trustees had taken — the church was insured to the amount of more than $50,000. This, with the amount saved in the walls and tower left standing, were an encouraging beginning for another building on the same spot. What remained of the burned church was transformed even during the fire into fantastic and even majestic piles of ice. It presented a most picturesque sight for weeks, and multitudes came to see it. A frieze of icicles bordered the broken walls. Transparent stalactites were suspended in the doors and windows, and deep blue grottoes opened toward the interior of the vestry.

Services were held the following Sunday in the Grand Opera House. The "Tribune," "Pioneer

Press," and other papers gave full accounts of this first gathering of the church after its great loss. One of them said: —

"All the seats were occupied below and above. Although everybody tried to be as cheerful as he could, there was an under-current of subdued emotion, and at best it was a solemn occasion. To be sure the house was brilliant. But the vision of that burning church of one week ago was too fresh in the minds of the people there to let them think of much else. Dr. Tuttle, the pastor of the Church of the Redeemer, who was in New York last Sunday when the Sanctuary burned, was present, and by his side was his able Associate, the Rev. M. D. Shutter. Each delivered a short address full of feeling and references to the sad event which had cast its terrible shadow upon them and upon the whole congregation."

In a little less than two years from this another church was standing on the old spot. It was dedicated on Sunday morning, November 24th, 1889. The ministers who took part in the services were all residents of the city. The sermon preached appears in this book. Rev. L. D. Boynton offered the invocation; Rev. W. H. Harrington read the responses, Rev. L. G. Powers the Scriptures, and Rev. August Dellgren one of the hymns. Rev. Marion D. Shutter made the dedicatory prayer.

The "Minneapolis Tribune" gave a full and most excellent account of the services, presenting cuts of the church, of the pews and windows, etc., sparing neither pains nor expense. The "Pioneer Press" also devoted interesting columns to the occasion. The regular choir consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Weed Monroe, Miss Olive Fremsted, and Mr. Henry Elliott. Profes-

sor Harmsen, who has been organist for some years, presided at the organ. There was in addition a large chorus. One of the city papers the next morning said: —

"The mellow chimes of the Church of the Redeemer, mute for nearly two years, rang out their sweetest music yesterday, calling to their rejuvenated house of worship the faithful of that old and popular church. All the members were present to rejoice with their pastors that the work was completed. Some had just arrived from across the sea, and others turned their steps from different parts of the country to share in this occasion. It was a family gathering. Not less than fifteen hundred people were in the church, and hundreds turned away unable to gain admittance at all. It was pleasant to see the older members of the church occupying pews corresponding to those they used in the former edifice. But for the new glories of the superb glass windows, and the wonderful new organ, and other added interior embellishments, they might have imagined themselves back in their old places after a vacation or a change of scene. The sun streamed in through the windows in a mellow, subdued flood of light. 'Oh, lovely! lovely, indeed!' were the whispered expressions on every side. There were a few luxuriant bunches of yellow and white crysanthemums about the platform and in the parlors, arranged by the Flower Mission. Save for these there was no effort at floral adornment. The church seemed more like a cathedral yesterday than like a church."

"The glory of this latter house is" in some respects "greater than of the former." Exteriorly the appearance is not noticeably different, except that, the sides being twenty feet longer, the proportion is better. Interiorly the change is greater and in some particulars improved. The old gallery, extending in grace-

fully curving lines on all sides of the auditorium, was more beautiful, but more in the way also, for it cut the two great transept windows in two and hid them. The present gallery runs across the ends only, leaving the great windows free and exposed, and giving the whole interior a grander and more spacious look. The wood finishings are of black walnut as before. The pews and pulpit, chairs and communion-table resemble the old ones. The greatest change has been caused by the six Memorial Windows placed in the two immense transept openings. A book might be written describing these windows. One of the panels on the east side is in memory of Harriet Putnam Morrison; one is for Frederick A. Gilson; one for the Rand-Coykendall family; and one for the Tuttle family. These designs were from the Tiffany Company, New York. There are but two panels, or apartments, on the west side; one in memory of members of E. W. Herrick's family, and one in memory of Frank Washburn, son of W. D. Washburn. These windows were from Herter Brothers, New York.

The Communion-table was an offering of the Edwards' family in memory of Mrs. Eugenia Noteware. The pulpit Bible was a gift from Mrs. Caroline Holmes.

The parlors, Sunday-school rooms, and other apartments are large, convenient, and completely answer, in arrangement and style, the varied requirements of the society.

The Church of the Redeemer Sunday-school, though never large compared with the congregation, has been an important adjunct always, and has received much attention by prominent members of the congregation.

It has supplied a large number of youthful candidates for church-membership. The following names appear on the records as superintendents: E. Perkins, W. D. Washburn, Paris Gibson, W. Woodard, J. J. Couchman, Rev. Moses Marston, W. P. Roberts, E. Junius Edwards, S. A. Stockwell, William Powell.

These persons have had charge of the Sunday-school library from time to time: H. L. Birge, George W. Chowen, W. G. Northup, S. B. Chase, Oscar C. Vail, Herbert Chowen, Preston King, Charles Sowle, Walter Kelley, W. J. Taylor.

The Ladies Social Circle has been a large and constant help to the church. This includes the Aid Society, a society for looking after the poor. These are some of the presidents: Mrs. D. Morrison, Mrs. W. W. Eastman, Mrs. O. A. Pray, Mrs. M. Hawkins, Mrs. N. Thompson, Mrs. A. T. Morse, Mrs. Goodrich, Mrs. Junius Edwards, Mrs. Stratton.

The Young Ladies' Flower Mission has charge of the floral decorations, brings flowers to the church every Sunday morning, and after service sends them to the sick. The following have been its presidents: Mrs. Nellie C. Tuttle, Miss Conkey, Miss Andrews, Miss Sowle, Miss Commons, Miss Heiser.

We have an organization called the Young People's Association; and a Young People's Missionary Society also. The Young People's Conference Meeting is held every Sunday evening a half hour before the regular service. The regular weekly Conference Meeting is held every Thursday evening.

That an edifice of such dimensions and elaborateness should have been planned and constructed and finished

without exciting opposition or adverse criticism from any source, and in such a way as to earn the most enthusiastic praise everywhere, may be deemed remarkable. And this was owing largely to the fortunate selection of a building committee composed of W. W. Eastman, E. W. Herrick, and O. A. Pray, — all substantial business men, who knew exactly what was wanted and how to obtain it. Mr. Pray spent almost his whole time in watching the building, and the signs of his excellent taste and thorough oversight are seen in every part of it. And this was his last great work. He lived but a few months after the church was dedicated. He had been trustee for years, and his services to the church are beyond estimate.

The Church of the Redeemer, as it now stands, is a conspicuous object in the city. Its lofty spire is seen at long distances on all sides. It is one of the finest churches in Minneapolis. Its congregation is one of the largest in the city and in the denomination. Its people are among the best known and most influential in town.

The Church of the Redeemer would not even appear to boast of what it has done, nor would it claim to have accomplished all it sought for and prayed for; our ideals excel the actual always. But if we go back a little beyond the quarter of a century to the beginning of its organization, and trace the history of the church up to the present, we can see plainly enough that it has made a marked advance. And in summing up the causes of whatever prosperity it has enjoyed, and which is just now more visible than ever before, a distinct emphasis, after humbly acknowledging the care

CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER, MINNEAPOLIS.

and goodness of God and the leadership of Christ in it all, should be laid on the strong and efficient board of trustees the church has always had. The present board is composed of D. Morrison, W. D. Washburn, M. B. Koon, Thomas Lowry, E. W. Herrick, F. H. Peavey, and W. G. Northup. The clerk of the society is George H. Fletcher. But few changes have been made in the trustees since the society began. By a custom of the congregation, — a custom that cannot be generally commended — the business of the society has been left mostly to the trustees. What they said and did was unquestioned law. The society would have cared more to attend the business meetings if it had had less confidence in the appointed business managers. Dorilus Morrison has appeared at the head of the trustees ever since the society was instituted. He came to Minneapolis in 1853. He has been always a distinguished factor in the society, a constant, prompt, generous helper. His gifts to the church, to charities of various kinds, and to our cause hereabouts, amount in the aggregate to almost a fortune. The same may be said of W. D. Washburn, who is now United States Senator from Minnesota. He arrived in Minneapolis in 1857. He has been one of our trustees for twenty years or more. Some of his gifts have been already referred to. The whole story of his generosity would make interesting reading.

Gen. C. C. Washburn, Ex-Governor of Wisconsin, whose home was in La Crosse, where his grave now is, though never formally connected with the Church of the Redeemer, was a warm friend of it, worshipped there when he was in the city, — he was here often,

even months at a time, looking after his large business interests, — and made to it on one occasion, at least, a considerable gift. Among his generous bequests was one to this city of $400,000 for the Washburn Home, an institution for orphans and half orphans, since built. Henry Brown and Harvey Brown, members of our congregation, have given liberally to charities in the city. The first built the Bethany Home. The latter has been and is a helping friend of the Home for Children and Aged Women.

But where shall our list of names end? It is by no means exhausted. Others in the society, old members and new ones, if in any respect less prominent, were not and are not less highly respected, nor less devoted to the church. The Church of the Redeemer has been highly favored from the start in having connected with it so many individuals of business and social influence. It is not without a twinge of conscience that I decide not to try to record here the numerous names that occur to me of persons who at the first, and all along, have worked so faithfully and sacrificed so willingly, in one way and another, and without whose work and sacrifices the church could not have lived nor prospered. And I suffer another twinge for making the names of the men so prominent, and saying so little of the women of the church, who have really been and are its life and its support. What church has ever had a nobler band of women looking after and advancing its interests than the Church of the Redeemer has had!

Several years ago the trustees, in accord with my

suggestion, invited Rev. L. D. Boynton, of Elgin, Ill., to become my Assistant for an indefinite period. Our relations were entirely pleasant; his labors were helpful to me and acceptable to the congregation, but he soon resigned to take the pastorship of the Second Church. Soon after, Rev. Marion D. Shutter, who for five years had been a successful and much loved pastor of the Baptist — Olivet — Church, in this city, having grown quietly into what he deemed a wider faith, plainly and affectionately explained to his people on a Sunday morning his changed condition of thought, and resigned. His farewell words were published on the following day in the city papers, and they pleased me so much by their clearness and frankness, that although we had met but once or twice and could not perhaps have recognized each other on the streets, I immediately addressed him a note asking permission to meet him in his study or receive him in mine. I had been a Baptist in my early years, and was anxious to know the history of his change, and to compare it with my own. We talked freely. He appeared to understand little, except in a general way, of our denomination, and not to have examined its doctrines particularly; to have parted from his former associations without any definite idea of where he should go or what new relations he should form. His explanations, so far as he made them, inspired me with the conviction that the fall of his previous belief had not included the essential doctrines of Christianity, — that he did not love his Saviour less by seeing him through another and wider creed; and hence I invited him to preach in the Church of the Redeemer.

He preached the second time, and the third time; and so satisfied were we all with his thought and manner and spirit, and so natural and generous was his treatment of our advances, that he was at once secured as my Associate. Fortunately for all parties, no great sensation occurred among those whom he left nor among those to whom he came. The pleasure with which we welcomed him was not offset by any ill-feeling, so far as we heard, in those who reluctantly resigned him to us. He parted in peace from his old friends, and quietly began his work among his new ones. His Associate pastorate began the first Sunday in April, 1886. Five years of his life and work among us have now passed, and they have been in all respects years of mutual harmony and success. His rare powers in the pulpit and his example everywhere promise a hopeful future for him and for the church. He rises every week higher and higher in the esteem and admiration of his people. His congregations are large and increasing. His place in the parish, in respect to the care of it and work done for it, has grown larger and mine smaller. That the love of God revealed in Christ and witnessed by the Holy Spirit may abide with him and with the church is my earnest prayer.

In addition to the Church of the Redeemer, we have now in Minneapolis, the Second — All Souls' — Church, Rev. S. W. Sample, pastor, on the east side; Third Church, in the west part; Fourth Church, Swedish, Rev. August Dellgren, pastor, in the south part; Fifth Church, on the north side. The Third and Fifth churches are at present without pastors.

BAPTISMAL MARBLE FONT,

CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER, MINNEAPOLIS

Copy of Thorwaldsen's Angel Font in the Church of Our Lady (Fruekirke) in Copenhagen, Denmark, by Professor Ch. Stein.

Some of the above statements were gleaned from very meagre records. It is likely that mistakes have occurred. A few names have perhaps been inadvertently omitted which should have appeared. I have done the best I could with the time and space and means at my command.

J. H. T.

Minneapolis, *May*, 1891.

A CLUSTER OF TRIBUTES.

DR. TUTTLE IN MINNEAPOLIS.

By Rev. Marion D. Shutter, D. D.

"His life was gentle; and the elements
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, This was a man!"

I HAVE been asked by the publishers to write a few words of tribute for this Memorial volume, and I am glad to comply with the request.

The occasion of the present publication is the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Dr. Tuttle's pastorate in the Church of the Redeemer, Minneapolis. A quarter of a century has he ministered to this people, and now he has become so firmly rooted in their hearts that he will grow there forever. The changes that have taken place in that period, the growth of the society from small beginnings to influence and power, are recorded elsewhere. Few pastorates have been of longer duration, and none have been more successful in all that deserves the name of success.

A minister's work is not to be measured by spasmodic activities, not by phenomenal interest

awakened for a few months, not by the applause of the hour, but by permanent results. Time judges all our work, and over that of Dr. Tuttle is written in letters of light, "Well done!"

These pages contain tributes from his life-long friends, a historical sketch of the church, which is rather better known as Dr. Tuttle's church than by its corporate name, and a number of the sermons he has preached. The book will be cherished by all members of the society and congregation as a memento of his faithful service in the past, while all will unite in wishing him still greater length of days and protracted usefulness. The prayer of the poet Horace for his friend will be the universal prayer for him: "May you arrive late in heaven!"

Some one has recently written: —

"I think we have sometimes taken pride in the fact that we were not the popular Church. We could feel that those who espoused our cause and came to the unpopular church did it out of principle. But if this be the rule, I must say there is one exception to it,— Minneapolis. But we may rejoice in the reason why the Universalist church in that city is the popular church. It is not because of its numbers, although in this we compare favorably with other sects; nor is it because of wealth, although the Church of the Redeemer is rich. It is because of the character of the people, and the influence of the great soul that has led them through all these years. The name of Dr. Tuttle

is a household word throughout the denomination. His life has been the object-lesson that has won the attention and admiration of all classes of men and of all the churches."

Dr. Tuttle and his work are recognized by the entire city. His praise is upon all lips, albeit he is outside of that particular boundary line staked out for God's kingdom and labelled "evangelical." He is known and honored by people of all religious beliefs and of no belief. Regardless of creed, hundreds in doubt and trouble seek his counsel and consolation. The young invoke his benediction at the marriage altar, the bereaved desire his sympathy at the open grave. He knows how to rejoice with those who rejoice, and how to weep with those who weep.

He is prominent in all good work for the benefit of the community, is identified with all charitable and humane enterprises, and is always upon the side of rational reforms.

His influence has extended far beyond his own city, and in neighboring towns and States, he has been widely sought for the lecture platform as well as for the pulpit. He is, like Daniel of old, "a man greatly beloved."

Since coming into the society, I have had but few opportunities of listening to Dr. Tuttle in the pulpit; but some of the sermons contained in this

volume it has been my privilege to hear. I distinctly remember the impression produced upon me by certain ones. I pronounced them at the time of their delivery equal to the best specimens of pulpit literature, and my judgment has not since been changed. Such sermons as those upon the smoking flax and bruised reed, the sheep that strayed from the fold into the wilderness, and the prayer wrung from the heart of him who exclaimed, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief," — remind us of the words of the prophet: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain; my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass."

Dr. Tuttle, as a preacher, has an earnest manner and a sympathetic voice; his style is picturesque with illustrations, often quaint; his diction full of grace and happy phrases, with occasional gleams of genial humor; his spirit reverent, tender, and humane. One cannot hear him without feeling that he is deeply sincere, and that above all other things he is anxious to do his hearers good. And the good he has done them throughout these years cannot be computed. Many a weary and burdened soul, after listening to one of his comforting discourses, has gone from the church, feeling "This was none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven."

For five years I have been associated with Dr. Tuttle in the work of this church and society. I came from another denomination. I understood but little of liberal thought. I simply knew that I did not longer belong to the ranks of orthodoxy. I had worked my own way to certain conclusions, hardly knowing where they would classify me, or whether they would make me a nondescript. A note from Dr. Tuttle, whom at that time I had not met, invited me to a consultation. I went. The result is known. We have worked together in perfect harmony. He has been kind and patient, charitably oblivious to all my faults and failings, gentle when what I have tried to do has fallen wretchedly below the standard his long and successful ministry had set up for the people, never indulging in ominous forebodings even when I have scattered theological wild oats.

Such an association as ours is, I believe, rare in the history of pastorates. Our personal friendship has grown through all these years, and there is no probability that it will ever be impaired or broken.

Minneapolis, *May*, 1891.

REMINISCENCES OF THE CHICAGO MINISTRY.

BY request of our Publishing House I attempt to cull from memory something of my experience in the years of early acquaintance with our beloved friend, Rev. Dr. Tuttle.

My acquaintance with him began in the autumn of 1859. The second Universalist church of this city was entering on the third year of its active existence. The short pastorate of the Rev. A. C. Barry had terminated, and left the parish weak and divided. Brother Tuttle came in response to a call that embraced no opposing voice; and yet to one less hopeful than he, the prospect would not have been considered full of promise. The old third Presbyterian church on Union Street, between Washington and Randolph Streets, was our place of meeting. The rent was low, and the surroundings were as uninviting as one could well imagine. Our small Sunday-school, which began with ten teachers and twenty scholars, had increased to about twice

its original numbers; but the congregation was not large nor rich.

I well remember that first Sunday of Brother Tuttle's service with us. It was a lovely autumn day; the people were eager to see and hear the man who had left a well-organized parish in Rochester, N. Y., where he was greatly beloved by a congregation that had given a very unwilling consent to his leaving them. How I marvelled that he could stand before that small congregation, in a "rented house," with a questionable outlook, and yet be so hopeful and earnest, even to enthusiasm! The cause of all this I came to understand better as the years went by. It was not long before the members of the church and congregation came to know the new pastor. In those days (how far away they seem now!) the injunction, "bear ye one another's burdens," had a force and application little understood to-day. For instance, on my way home to dinner one day soon after the arrival of the new pastor and family, I called at their home on Washington Street. Their goods had just arrived, and fortunately in the placing of the carpets one quite nicely fitted the front (family) chamber; what more natural than that I should make an exhibition of my skill at carpet-laying? And then and there began my knowledge of that home life which brought nearer and nearer to me, as the years went

on, a knowledge of that "dear domestic bliss" which in its subtle influence touched every one that had the happy fortune to know the family. From that day we were no longer strangers; the interests of the pastor and his family were, in some part at least, the care of the individual members of the parish. How could it be otherwise? Rarely has there lived, I am sure, a more self-forgetting, or self-sacrificing soul than the dear wife of our brother, and this virtue, so pre-eminent in both, was contagious. And so the early years of his ministry went on, binding closer the heart of the pastor to that of his people.

At length a better location than Union Street and a better abiding place than the old Third Church came to be the ambition of our parish. But alas! poverty on every hand looked us in the face. Brother A. G. Throop, one of the early founders of the church, and one of its most loyal supporters, had met with severe pecuniary reverses, and his subscription to the new church was $50, to be paid in day's-works, at $1.50 per day. Let me add that the subscription was paid! And this was a possible average of the ability of the subscribers to the new church building. Through all this the pastor was the soul of hopeful cheerfulness; in fact, he seemed to posesss such a fund of it, as to be able to furnish all that was needed by the less

hopeful. At length the new church was completed and dedicated in the early spring of 1861. First came the dedication of the Sunday-school rooms. I can never forget the glowing countenance of Brother Tuttle on that happy Sunday morning. The small Sunday-school had grown in numbers and enthusiasm. The average attendance for the year had been 250, and with every available seat filled, no wonder the pastor's heart was full to overflowing. Alas! the fearful history about to be written, in which many of those present were to bear an active part, and scenes to be witnessed within those very walls which were to help make the record,— all this was mercifully withheld, and came not to mar the gladness of that hour.

My business calling me to Michigan, in April, where I was for the year following, separated me in large part from the details of church work, but not from my pastor. I knew of his loyalty to country, and how he was looking to that terrible future which surely promised the breaking of church and family ties; the voice of his country in the hour of its peril was to him the voice of God. When I returned to Chicago in April, 1862, the "horror of a great darkness" was upon us. Looking over his congregation, the pastor saw with aching heart the young men that he had gathered, the boys that through personal love had become

attached to him, who through the Sunday-school had found their way to the church; he saw them the soldiers that were to carry the flag of his country to victory. To him it was as though "the bitterness of death" had come; and the church he had gathered, and which seemed just organized for effective work, was soon to be decimated that recruits might go forward. All this and much more came to his clear vision as he studied the logic of events. And yet never did his courage desert him; never was he less than "a tower of strength" to the hesitating and wavering. "God and my native land" was his watchword; and although his work in the gathering of a parish was to be as if it had not been, and his personal sacrifices were to be as though they had not been made, still his duty was before him; his work was plain. At last it culminated in the enlistment of over twenty of the young men of his church. Not one of that number will forget that last Sunday, when in solemn sacrament we pledged ourselves to God and our country's cause; nor shall we forget that voice of the pastor, at times broken by emotion beyond his control, yet full of benediction for those it almost broke his heart to bid farewell. Mrs. Livermore has made the occasion immortal in her hymn composed for the service, and in which we all joined as far as our emotions permitted.

"So here we part; our paths diverge,
Each leads a different way;
Ye go to freedom's holy war,
We tarry here to pray."

In all the stirring events of these fearful years, Brother Tuttle was deeply interested. It was not merely the interest of a sentiment, but of a principle. He not only preached, but he practised, and made greater personal sacrifices than will ever be known. His house was open night and day for the men who went to the front, and for the maimed and broken soldiers who returned from the field. He was ever doing and giving. He did not forget the boys in camp; he was their friend and pastor still. What was in his power to do to light and keep burning the fires of patriotism, he was more than ready to do. Almost the only relic of that conflict which nearly rent our nation asunder, that I have cared to preserve, is a sword that on its hilt bears this inscription: "Presented to Lieutenant James H. Swan, by his Pastor, Rev. James H. Tuttle, September, 1862." The occasion of its presentation was a beautiful afternoon, just before the Battery was leaving Camp Douglas for Memphis. His words on that occasion were worthy the Christian patriot that he was. "Take it; let it be not only a memento of a pastor's prayers and love, but a reminder of your duty to

your country and your God. What the fortunes of war may bring to you, we know not; all these are in the keeping of a wise and good God. Have no undue anxiety for the dear ones you leave behind; they will live in the hearts that love you, and the Providence that has hitherto kept you when together, will faithfully watch over them in your absence, and when 'this cruel war is over' we will again renew the old associations, and take up the old duties. The blessing of God be upon you." Words of wisdom and of love!

Not many months were to elapse before failing health and strength sent me back to the old scenes. The pastor was there to meet and welcome me. A severe illness that separated me from the outside world ensued; but those sweet ministries the memory of which gilds those dark days with a wonderful glory, I knew came daily from the family of the pastor, — messages that could not be spoken, tokens of remembrance that the fearful malady forbade should be given by the hand that would gladly have presented them. How did he find time for all these, and for the thousand and one other offices that were a part of the constant demand on the time, strength, and sympathy of the faithful pastor!

As I look back over the intervening years, and recall the fearful inroads the war and its accompany-

ing vicissitudes made in the parish and church, I wonder it outlived them all. Nothing but the consecration of the two faithful souls, with the divine blessing as its constant complement, could have made its continued existence possible. No wonder that heart and hand and brain grew weary, and that the failing health of the faithful wife and mother must be heeded, — absolute rest, with change of scene and association must be had, if the union of husband and wife was to be kept unbroken. Do you think it possible that they could turn from the field where the work of almost a generation had been crowded into the space of a few years, and everything but life itself had been laid on the altar of sacrifice, and feel no regrets? True, the ideal had not been fully realized, the goal of the early ambition not quite reached; but at what a fearful cost to pastor and wife had the deep and broad foundations been laid, on which the future temple was to be reared, — days of weary work, nights of watching and prayer, tears for the dead, sorrow for those that lived and suffered; all this and more had been the ever-flowing contribution toward the final result.

God be praised, the sacrifice was not in vain. The offering found a divine acceptance, and as the family one summer day turned their faces toward the north, though they may not have said, "With

more than patriarch's joy, Thy call I follow to the the land unknown," yet no doubt it was with many an unsaid prayer that the result should be health and a renewal of youth to the one so worn and broken.

But I am not longer to follow the fortunes of these two who have lived in my heart for more than thirty years. I cannot separate them; to me they are ever as one. What if the dear wife and mother, seeing that change of place and scene did not bring back the lost health, was prevailed on to trust the treacherous billows, in the hope that the lands beyond the sea would bring a restoration denied at home? And so with no familiar face or voice or hand but that of the last-born son to smooth the pillow of death, or watch by her in the last hours of life she went; and what if the heart that had been as true as hers waited, through days and nights of agony, only to hear at last that henceforth his path of life was to be without the tender companionship that had been the balm of every sorrow, and the crown of every joy; and what if my own heart has bounded with a new joy as I saw the lonely man take up anew the burden and the cross, and carry with a strength beyond what I could have believed the still heavier loads and larger responsibilities, — what, I say, even if all this and more presses for ut-

terance? I will be silent, for others will speak of all this better than I can.

Allow me this closing word. I am devoutly grateful for myself, my wife, and our dear child that into our lives has come this sweet friendship; through all the years it has grown stronger. Individual experiences of joy and sorrow have only refined and intensified it. It will live on and on! And now I hand you my poor offering; I wish it were worthier the grand soul and the memorial volume for which it is written.

JAMES H. SWAN.

CHICAGO, *June*, 1891.

DR. TUTTLE'S ROCHESTER MINISTRY.

By Rev. George W. Montgomery, D.D.

THE pastorate of Rev. J. H. Tuttle in Rochester, N. Y., began January, 1854, and ended Nov. 30, 1859. The success of his ministry in Richfield Springs and Fulton, N. Y., assured the friends of our Society that he was the man for them. And sure enough his labors proved him to be so. I am requested to describe his Rochester pastorate. As a work of love I am glad to do so; for during those years of intimate association, a friendship linked our hearts together with a bond so strong that my eighty-one years has not weakened nor dimmed it. By my almost constant association with him in his public administration and family life; by my diaries that cover the six years of his Rochester work; by compelling memory to uncover some of its hidden stores; I feel sure that I can give a faithful, though it may be a brief statement of the character of his ministry in the city of Rochester.

It was a Christian ministry baptized in the spirit of the Son of God. For our pastor was loyal in every thought and fibre of his mind to divine truth as revealed in the Scriptures. Never a preacher of doubt, he was thoroughly prepared, both affirmatively and negatively, fearlessly to proclaim the whole "counsel of God." His avowal of the divine Word in all its phases was positive, and was so warmed by an honest and loving heart behind it, as to inspire his hearers with confidence in their Christian teacher. And when his faith was assailed, as it was by Rev. Charles G. Finney of Oberlin, and afterwards by Rev. Mr. Watts of the Methodist denomination, in sermons preached in this city, evincing a bitter spirit along the lines of the old and worn-out objections against our God-given truth, Brother Tuttle was more than equal to the occasion. His replies were so cogent, his proofs so clear and conclusive, presented in such a genuine Christian spirit, that it was the opinion of thinking people that Brother Tuttle was the victor in the discussion. But in all respects his ministry in the pulpit was genuinely Christian, and increased in excellence and power as the years passed away.

Every department of his parish received his care and attention. The church, the Sunday-school, the social and prayer meetings, and the varied interests that grew out of them, were watched,

guarded, and fostered by unwearied thoughtfulness and patient labor, and yet in an unobtrusive spirit that excluded all thought of undue authority. In his general and special intercourse with his people, personal communication was constantly used. Never shrinking from talking about the Saviour, divine truth, and the necessity of a religious life, he came very near to the hearts of his people, — to the youth, to the children, to the sick, the dying, the mourning, the wayward, and even the most obstinate opponent. For every act and word so evidently came from a loving heart, was so completely clothed with genuine courtesy and kindly interest, and was so evidently the outspoken voice of a perfect Christian life, that all respected and loved him. I do not forget, but with a full heart bring to view, the dearly beloved wife, whose love was completely absorbed in his work. Calm and equable in temper, entirely devoid of undue pride, always courteous to the poor as to the rich, with warm sympathy for the young, the troubled, and the sorrowing, with strong devotion to all religious interests, with unwavering loyalty to our precious faith, and as a wife, a mother, a friend, a professed member of the visible church of the Son of God, always living a Christian life, — this noble woman could not help being a beneficent power in the ministry of her revered husband. It was so and more.

The influence of Brother Tuttle's ministry could not be confined to the bounds of his immediate friends in the Society. As the years rolled by, that influence touched the community at large with its gentle but resistless power, until universal esteem and regard were cheerfully accorded to the pastor of the Universalist Church. The character of that ministry is powerfully endorsed by one significant fact among many others. Since the close of that ministry in 1859, thirty-three years have closed their record. During that time, Brother Tuttle has made many visits to his old field of labor. On two occasions he was present when the entire ministry of the Society, consisting of Dr. Tuttle, myself, and his honored and beloved successor, Dr. Asa Saxe, were in the pulpit to join in a mutual service. And in all these visits, Brother Tuttle was greeted with warm regard, with affectionate welcome, and with loving remembrances of old associations. I cannot be mistaken in affirming that the ministry which commanded such precious tokens as these, must have been a ministry alike honorable to the cause of Christ and to the denomination of which he is a beloved member.

Thank God for the gift of James H. Tuttle!

Rochester, *May* 25, 1891.

TWELVE SERMONS.

I.

BEAUTY FOR ASHES.

Beauty for ashes. — Isaiah lxi. 3.

A SHORT text, but a long lesson; and a sermon from it more impressive than mine can be has been already preached, — preached in the resurrection of this church which we have assembled to dedicate.

Not many months ago, the ground beneath us was covered with a dreary mass of debris and dust. The outlines of the former edifice which stood here were visible; parts of the old walls, blackened and torn, mournfully recalled the ruin that had been wrought in them; the handsome tower which stood erect and intact against that tempest of flame still held its solitary guard here.

And that tower, yet pointing heavenward its loyal finger, helped to anchor us to this spot. But for it we might have drifted to

some new and more remote place. Though the chimes had not the heart to ring, nor we to hear them, in sight of such desolation, — though the clock no longer counted the hours for us, the grand symmetrical structure which held them drew our eyes and our thoughts this way, — yea, and our steps also, — impressing us, as often as we saw it or passed by it, with counsels of fidelity; fidelity to the ground we had so zealously consecrated to God; fidelity to the associations and memories which the fire had left unconsumed. Nothing else remained of that almost faultless temple which cost so many sacrifices to build, whose very stones we had learned to love, and before whose altar we had all so long bowed in humble worship.

Behold the change! What have we now?

When you came here on that terrible winter morning, and saw your beautiful church falling slowly but surely into ruins; and afterwards, whenever we thought of our sudden loss, — whenever, especially, we gathered in strange places for Sabbath service, — God said to us, "I will give thee beauty for

ashes, the oil of gladness for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

We were naturally weak and cast down then; now, through the grace of God and the love of Christ, we are strong and cheerful. The powers of heaven and the powers of earth have combined and mended our loss, relighted our darkened lamp, and converted the ashes where we stood disconsolate into another Temple of Beauty.

We were sorrowful then, I have said, but we never lost faith, not even in ourselves. The Trustees were men of wide and varied experience, so schooled in business affairs, so expert in handling emergencies and repairing misfortunes, that they met this calamity with inspiring courage and spent little time in useless lament. They called a council, and without hesitation stoutly resolved to rebuild; the Society with equal promptness and bravery met and ratified the action. All talked so earnestly and so cheerfully of the matter, that the trouble, which stood before us mountain-high, apparently, at the start, melted rapidly away.

Meetings were held — except for a little time the following summer, when the Unitarian Church, generously offered, was used — in the Grand Opera House. We returned to our new vestry room last Christmas, where we have remained until to-day.

Strangely enough the congregations, notwithstanding our many disadvantages, scarcely diminished. Though we had no pews to rent, no subscriptions in circulation, the old pew-holders generously continued their contributions, keeping up almost the usual income. The various auxiliaries of the church never worked more earnestly, more unitedly, nor more successfully.

The key-note therefore of our worship today is joy; and why should it not be? We have had our lamentations; let us now lift up our voices in praise!

A throng of memories press upon me at this moment, — memories which reach back through all the years of my pastorship to the time when I first came among you.

My dear friends, we have walked together almost a quarter of a century! And what

experiences we have passed through during this period! What changes! The children whom I met then I now meet as men and women. What was then little more than the village of Minneapolis has grown to this great city. What transformations have happened in our streets, and houses, and shops, and people; yea, in all our separate lives!

I remember our first meetings and small audiences in Harrison Hall; and, soon after, in our new church on Fifth Street, corner of Fourth Avenue. I well remember how pleasant that little church seemed to us, how really proud we were of it — of the beautiful frescos, the first in town; of the organ, one of the first in town, and a gift from one of our noble Trustees; and of the growing congregations, most of all. It is not wonderful if the nearly complete happiness of those early years has not been excelled by the later and more prosperous ones. God blessed us in many ways and in large measures. The harmony which reigned among us, the hopes which inspired us, the friendships which warmed our hearts, created for us what appears to-day as I look

back upon it something very like an earthly Paradise.

Most of us had come to Minneapolis from Eastern homes and at the most ambitious period of life; had come, anxious and in haste to set at work our quickened energies in these fresher fields of enterprise.

The years have passed; and how swiftly they have passed! New hopes have been born to us and old ones have perished. The ashes over which we wept when our noble church was burned, were not the only ashes our tears have rained upon. Death, mightier than fire, and swifter often, has swept down our loved ones. We heard the burial words "Earth to earth and ashes to ashes," and they fell with an unutterable weight of grief on our hearts. But we may offer grateful praise to God to-day for the promise that our dead shall live again and be restored to us, and that beauty shall blossom on their dust also.

I see on my right hand and on my left beautiful *Memorial Windows*, — and what is the meaning of them? What is the lesson

these windows teach us, and will always teach us as often as we look at them?

They testify, first of all, to the depth and perpetuity of human love, — to the fact that we have kept, and will continue to keep, our departed friends in near and loving memory. They mean what the text means; they are a pleasing, comforting commentary, rather, on the text. They are a constant sermon preached by Christian art and Christian symbolism on the truth of the Resurrection, — of a happy and endless reunion of souls beyond the grave. I see yonder *Hope*, or *Faith*, holding up her lamp and walking timidly through the valley and shadow of death. A golden light streaming down from the unseen future falls on her pallid face, and changes it suddenly into a look of radiant confidence; her fear departs, her step grows stronger as she approaches the crystal gate that is swinging open to give her welcome. Yonder, too, I see *Memory*, robed in blue, standing with a saddened, downcast countenance, looking for a Love that has disappeared; but in her right hand she holds a scroll on which is written,

"Until the day breaks, and the shadows flee away." And the morning, as we see across the whole upper window, has broken; the day is opening and spreading toward the West; floods of light are pouring along the sky, expelling the darkness and the mystery, bathing the fields and mountain-tops in flames of loveliness.

Against the centre of the window, gold and purple screens are hung, hiding something behind, as eternity hides its scenes from mortal eyes; but in front of all, casting cheerful rays over all, are brilliantly colored lamps lowered out of the heavens, apparently, as signs of trust, and as types of the light that is shining on the unseen future beyond.

And there in that other window is a figure of *Purity*, with purity's emblem, a white lily, in her hand. What more worthy than this or more appropriate can ornament the mysterious portal that leads into the great hereafter? What better mediator between the visible and the invisible can there be than Purity? "Blessed are the pure in heart, for

they shall see God;" now and always, here and in heaven.

And finally, there is displayed to us in the following picture the lesson of a brave young knight, who has fallen, with his armor on, at the beginning of life's battle, and whose sword a hovering angel has seized and is bearing off. If we mourn, as we must, the loss of the noble youth; if we vainly strive to answer the question, why one so young, so full of promise, so deeply loved, could not have remained to spend his manhood and his usefulness here, we may exchange the dark problem for the Hope painted in those magnificent colors, that the life which terminated on earth, and too soon, as it seemed to us, was lifted higher and started in a yet grander career of happiness. And so there is spread before us on this glass, and on that, winning our belief by charming forms and fascinating colors, a series of representations which must not only help to magnify the power and spirit of the sermons we shall listen to here, but to carry us up and out of our doubts and sorrows, on to mounts of resignation and peace.

I wish I had full strength to tell you more of what one part of one of these windows signifies to me and mine especially. I remember how I sat down at times and wept in the ashes of personal sorrow, and how you, my friends, came to me, and through your sympathizing love and kindness helped to give me the "garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;" and now after these many years, — now, with a friendship which seems to have been neither weakened nor dulled by time, you have raised here, and to my family, this artistic monument of glass. How shall I better express the *in*expressible gratitude I feel for this latest exhibition of your inexhaustible favors, than to say that I accept this gift also as "Beauty for ashes"!

And what overflowing thankfulness ought we all to feel to-day, and every day, that God has made the giving of "Beauty for ashes" possible, and not only possible, but certain, sooner or later; possible and certain in all things, — in all our human lives, and in all worlds.

The temptation is strong to make my ser-

mon almost exclusively retrospective and historical. But I should fall sadly below the high purpose of this occasion, if I simply asked you now to rejoice over our past prosperity, — over the union of spirit in which we have hitherto worked, and at the progress we have hitherto achieved. Our Dedication service would shrink into a comparatively meagre importance, if we should spend the whole hour in exultation over the fact, great and hopeful though it be, that we have been successful in raising a better and grander church here on the ground of the old one.

For what reason was the old church erected? and why has this new one followed? Why should any church exist?

Unless we are able to answer questions like these, — to perceive and to appreciate some of the truths and principles which lie at the foundation of all structures of this kind, to give an adequate explanation of Christian worship everywhere, and under all its forms, — our business is too uncertain and trifling to merit either the favor of God or the congratulations of men. The Almighty

can spare any single House like ours, and any single Congregation like this, except they stand in the line of his infinite work, and contribute to the sum of his infinite purpose; and hence he has not led us to this place again to enjoy a selfish pride in circumstances that touch and advance our welfare alone.

If what our text says and implies had not been a truth, and a truth of universal, endless force, and we had not believed it heartily, we should have had no inspiring motive for rebuilding a church, and no law on which to rest the power for rebuilding it. If all the best lines of religious thought and doctrine do not centre in the law or principle suggested by the text, then our faith walks with a broken staff and heaven is but a dream.

I continue the discussion therefore with the earnest conviction that the words "Beauty for ashes," read in their connection, and in connection with still other supplementary parts of Scripture, contain not only one of the salient facts of Divine revelation, but also a great principle of all rational systems of

Christian philosophy; not in bulk, but in essence; not in detail, but in essentiality.

If, taking our hint from the material creation, we can give the words mentioned the largest interpretation they will bear, and say that everything in the moral and spiritual world which can be symbolically called ashes, will finally be converted into Beauty, then we may find in these words a prophecy and a promise of the ultimate salvation of the whole human race.

Of course this wonderful result involves all the working forces of religion, from God down to the lowest human being; it involves God's love for us and ours for him; it involves the Life, and Death, and Resurrection, and Mission of Jesus Christ; it involves universal enlightenment and universal holiness. But when all these are summed up, when we have read the Bible through and studied it carefully, extracted its substance, gathered the best words of the prophets and the clearest teachings of the Gospel, what have we more or less than the promise of "Beauty for ashes." If, then, our humble argument assumes to rest

one of its sides on Nature and Reason, its other and greater support is the word of God.

It is a satisfaction and a help to most persons, to discover that the religious truths they cherish most are rooted, or seem to be rooted, in the laws of Nature as well as in the text of Revelation.

When the second St. Paul's Church in London, whose foundations were laid in the year 1087, on the site of a still older edifice, was lying in ruins, and while the question of reconstruction was being discussed, some of the workmen accidentally found in the ashes a stone inscribed with the Latin word, *Resurgam*, "I shall rise again." The sight of these prophetic letters, which they felt that Providence had at the critical moment thrown in their way, stimulated the people to go immediately at work, and lay in that same spot the foundations of the new Cathedral. It was this word *Resurgam* which you practically saw engraved on the prostrate walls of the Church of the Redeemer. "I shall rise again," it said; and it has

risen again. A new church stands here. But what, as I have intimated, is vastly more important than the resurrection of this church, is the natural law which made its resurrection possible; a law which all the world may rejoice over no less than we. *Resurgam* is a promise lying in every mass of ashes; that is, every mass which contains anything the world may wish for or need again. Evil when it is once burned will remain burned. God will make an end and a complete end, we may hope, of sin. But whatever is true and pure and lovely, if it once disappear, will, at some time and in some form, reappear.

The first lesson of ashes is seldom a pleasant one. If they say that a house has been burned down, that a lumber-pile has perished, that a whole city has been laid in ruins, or especially that a human life has been quenched, the story is a sad one.

The Roman cinerary urns, which held all that was left on earth after cremation, repeated to the survivors a perpetual tale of grief. Among the Jews, clothing in sack-

cloth and ashes was a confession of humiliation and suffering.

But there is another and brighter lesson to be learned from ashes. Light and empty as they always seem, they have more value sometimes than the things consumed.

What more than ashes is the ground under our feet, — is the whole earth indeed? The history of our globe is largely a history of fire; or of decay. It was born and baptized in fire. The first grasses and flowers and forests grew up from heaps of ashes. If the earth be a temple, it is a temple standing in the ruins of older ones.

And there are other agencies besides fire turning things into ashes, — or into dust, which is the same. Wind, rain, and frost dissolve the objects they touch as certainly, though not as rapidly, as heat. Hence, while portions of the earth's surface exist in living organized forms, much the larger portions are only dead matter.

There seem to be everywhere two directly opposite movements in Nature, two opposite roads, — one leading down, and the other

up; one into life, and the other out of it. Both roads are thronged with travellers. One may doubt at times whether the world has more cradles than graves. The cities of the dead vie in population with the cities of the living.

This, however, appears to be certain, — and our comfort also, — that Nature holds its own always; and more than holds its own. Nothing dethrones it. Nothing bankrupts it. It keeps forever on its course.

The most careless observer must have noticed how carefully Nature protects itself, and provides for itself; how skilfully it heals itself when sick or bruised; mends itself when broken; repaints itself when faded; reclothes itself when naked; how it gathers its ravelled ends and reweaves them into lovelier forms; and how, in spite of advancing years, it maintains its youthful look. Terrible things have happened to it since its birth. It has been melted; it has been drowned; earthquakes have shaken it, and cyclones have rent it. And how did it live through all these? How did it lift its

head again from the engulfing waters, and come out alive from its consuming furnaces? The floods seem only to have washed it and made it cleaner; and the fires only purified it. Time, instead of leaving only wrinkles there, has put a smoother and a more beautiful face on it.

And now are there no encouraging moral and religious suggestions in all this? No suggestions of a similar method of divine governing elsewhere? Are we not taught in all this, that the law of Preservation, — as we call it in Nature, or of Salvation, — as we call it in Religion, follows close after destruction and thwarts it? That life raises from the dust all the good that death drags into it?

What does Nature do with its ashes? The text answers this question. But let us try to answer it also; or rather let us see how Nature herself answers it.

Ashes appear to be Nature's building material.

The mythological Phœnix was born not from another bird, but from its own ashes;

and hence was made, perhaps, a symbol of Immortality. The Greek fable was doubtless a Greek perception of the fact that Nature creates from its own ashes.

One of the earliest records of the Bible is that "God formed man out of the dust of the ground." What better account has science yet given of man's creation? What besides dust was there to form the human body, or any other material object, of?

And having only dust to create things of, trees, flowers, insects, beasts, man, it is one part of Nature's work to keep on hand a supply of dust; and this supply comes, in part, at least, if not wholly, through combustion and decay.

And let us notice that Nature never wastes anything, — a form of economy which man is learning, but has been too slow in learning. Much that ignorance once threw away as valueless is now collected and worked over to new uses. We gather rags and straw, for instance, and manufacture them into paper; we burn, and so utilize, the smoke of our chimneys; we feed the furnace fires of our

saw-mills with their own dust. The farmer sets fire to his stack of straw, and what becomes of that which the fire leaves? It goes into the next year's crop. The spots of ground where the stack stood, though blackened and dead apparently, is richer than before; and all the sparks and cinders which the wind bore away from the flames fertilized the soil where they fell.

What is more beautiful than the violet, or the lily? and what is more offensive than the substances that often feed its growth? We charge the scavenger nothing for our street-sweepings and are glad to be rid of them, but the florist on whose beds the vile cartings were emptied charges us well for his roses. "Give us," say the gardens, "your refuse, your scraps and ends, and we will give you beauty for them;" "give us," say the fields, "the wastes of your houses and barns, and we will give you back orchards and grains."

"There is no death! The dust we tread
Shall change beneath the summer showers
To golden grain and mellow fruit,
Or rainbow-tinted flowers.

"The granite rocks disorganize
To feed the hungry moss they bear
The forest leaves drink daily life
From out the viewless air."

And now we have another and greater question — What becomes of the ashes of humanity? of the ruin and waste that lie about everywhere in the moral world?

Nations have their growth and decay, their throes, upheavals, revolutions, and often their final plunge into destruction. There have been social volcanoes as devastating as those of Etna and Vesuvius.

Travellers in the old countries come as frequently upon decaying kingdoms and institutions as upon crumbling stones and castles. What mouldering piles of human opinions, theories, philosophies, doctrines, and plans lie scattered about in all lands, ancient and modern! The human mind sheds its thoughts as trees do their foliage, and thoughts like leaves fall to die and rot often on the ground; and what else becomes of them? The trees are reclothed; and the dead leaves, because they enrich the earth where they

lodge, become a part of the market where the new garments are bought. So the outgrown and discarded ideas which drop away and decompose evolve in this apparently wasteful process an energy which rises and helps in a small way to refurnish the world-intellect they left denuded. The dust of old empires and states is the mother of younger ones.

Let us keep the analogy of Nature still in sight. Nature allows nothing, we repeat, to go to waste. Does God govern with less economy in human affairs? Does he through natural law utilize the straws and rags, and even noxious gases, and yet cast into utter nothingness whatever falls away from human life? Not one particle of matter, it is asserted, has ever been annihilated; have mind, and thought, and feeling shared a worse fate? Libraries have been burned, but very little if any knowledge has perished. Few, if any, of the ancient arts have been lost. What, beyond relighting, has been extinguished in science? The iconoclasts have been busy; but what truth have they destroyed? Where a single lamp of civilization once burned, two

or a dozen are burning now. No real sun has gone down in literature which has not risen again.

"All grim and soiled and tan,
I saw a strong one in his wrath
Smiting the godless shrines of man
Along his path.

'I looked; aside the dust-cloud rolled,
The waster seemed the builder too;
Uspringing from the ruined old
I saw the new.

"'T was but the ruin of the bad, —
The wasting of the wrong and ill;
Whate'er of good the old time had
Was living still."

The summer passes, but the sunshine is caught and garnered in the ripened fruits and grains. The oak of a hundred years has all the earlier growths still ringed about its heart. So our human life holds all its past experiences. What we are is also, in part, what we are to be. The Present lives forever in the Past.

"Fool! All that is at all
Lasts ever, past recall:
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure.

What entered in to thee,
That was, is, and shall be:
Time's wheel runs back or stops, potter and clay endure."

The Ark brought seeds from a drowned race across the flood, and left them where they could be sown anew. Martyrs have died at the stake, but the cause they espoused has lived on. Whatever truth disappeared in Catholicism reappeared, in altered form and spirit, in Protestantism. The decay of ritualism in England nourished other upspringing sects. And when the time came for a more radical Protestantism in New England it rose and flourished on ground covered over with decaying beliefs.

Whether we interpret Peter's language literally or figuratively, the truth it teaches is the same. "And the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Nevertheless we, according to promise, look for a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Beauty for ashes!

The "new heavens and the new earth," however, will be new only, it may be, in the

sense of being made over and better out of old material. If no matter has been annihilated none has perhaps been added. The earth was at the beginning "without form and void." Is it not still so to some extent? The "Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Is not the same infinite spirit moving over the waters and lands now, bringing beauty and life and fruit out of them?

Some thoughtful people are alarmed, and not without cause, at the scepticism of our times. They think or fear that they see a breaking up of the churches, — of faith itself. We can rebuild, they say in substance, our burned *house* of worship, but what shall be done, they ask, when confidence in worship itself is gone; when reason and science have, as they threaten to do, destroyed the motive and the spirit of prayer?

I comprehend the question to some extent, and the anxiety that prompts it; and my reply is that religion fundamentally is indestructible. The instinct for worship, and the necessity for it also, is rational and abiding.

All the theories of prayer may be ever so much confused, but men will nevertheless continue to pray. Exile all the churches, and they will soon be called back again. Let men come with their destructive breath and blow out the lamp of the Bible, and before the smoke has vanished Heaven will relight it. They carried Wickliff's Bible, you remember, into St. Paul's churchyard and burned it; but there has been scarcely a Bible printed since in which that early translation has not left its marks. Yes, and Wickliff himself, buried in that same churchyard, was not allowed to rest there; his dust was exhumed and thrown into the river, whence it was borne to the ocean.

> "The Avon to the Severn runs,
> The Severn to the sea;
> Thus Wickliff's dust shall shed abroad
> Wide as the waters be."

So it is always; persecution only scatters the truth it seeks to dishonor. The cross of Christ, intended for his shame, proclaimed his glory; in the grave where his body was placed, the angels announced his resurrection.

The worst that can happen to religion, in the end, is the loss of what is false in it. We should be glad to exchange any religious error for its ashes, and to resign our faith in its resurrection.

If our denomination has had more than its share of opposition in the past, let us hope it may have hereafter a corresponding measure of prosperity. If in years gone by we have put on sackcloth and ashes because of the defiant attitude toward us of other sects, of the tardiness with which they have acknowledged our claims, there is now good reason, in these better and more tolerant days, for putting on the "garment of praise."

Our church will live as long, and as long only, as its living will be of use in the world. The question of our future is a question of faithfulness and zeal; of fidelity to Christ. No opportunity seems greater, no mission wider, no prospect brighter than ours; and if at any time there shall be a grander victory than ours, it will be because some other church excels us in the qualities which merit success.

God's promise to give beauty for ashes, and the reflection of this promise in Nature, offer a principle on which our own conduct should always be based. "We are God's fellow-laborers." Man is naturally a creator and builder. He loves the beautiful, and is never so happy, — never should be, at least, — as when he is making things beautiful which were not so before. It is his highest mission to plant flowers where thorns grew, to pour comfort into hearts of sorrow, to substitute doubt for faith, happiness for misery, knowledge for ignorance, and purity for sin; to transform all the waste places in the world, material and spiritual, into fruitful fields and blossoming gardens.

May this church edifice, which stands for beauty of architecture and beauty of decoration, stand also for beauty of Faith and Life; yea, may all who worship here "worship in the beauty of holiness."

Jesus went about doing good, and that was giving "beauty for ashes." And Jesus is our example.

The saddest ruins to be seen on earth are

the ruins of character. A soul consumed by the fire of sin, — what is more awful, more lamentable; what apparently more hopeless? What seems more fit for oblivion, for annihilation even? And there are Christians who think that giving beauty to such ashes is impossible. Jesus taught, however, by word and by his mission, that the worst of sinners may be saved; that he had come on earth to save all sinners.

Has Nature more potent means for defeating corruption, for rescuing hostages from the hands of destruction, than Christianity has in its higher realm? We do, alas, die in sin; but we are raised by the power of God and "made dead to sin," — we are "born again and of the spirit." "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as wool." This is the most wonderful of all the works of God, — this changing of sinners into saints; of blasphemies into prayers; of coarse, imbruted characters, into refined and gentle ones! I do not mean to say, for I do not believe, that the ordinary powers of mind are competent to results like these; that the law which con-

verts a scarlet sin into transparent purity, is in no sense superior to that which transforms carbon into a diamond, or black mud into a white lily. We have no ordinary alembic which can melt immoral characters and pour out the mixture in the shape of holiness. Conversion in its New Testament meaning is the combined work of the Holy Spirit and the human will. It is Nature quickened, moved, helped, guided by influences superior to Nature. Nature is called into the discussion because, in showing what God does through it, and in this underside of his rule, in the way of saving what seems irretrievably lost, we learn what he will do, and even excel, in the upper and spiritual side. One of Browning's lines in his "Saul" is appropriate here.

> "God did choose
> To receive what man may *waste, desecrate, never quite lose.*"

And now is the final question: Does God's promise to give "beauty for ashes" end with this life? Does the all-pervading, all-conquering, and all-regenerating law we have traced through Nature up to Nature's God

stop at the grave? The church we have built here, our service of Dedication, our hopes and prayers, our love, our faith, this Bible open before me, and the voices of the earth, all answer "No."

> "Alas for him who never sees
> The stars shine through his cypress trees;
> Who, helpless, lays his dead away,
> Nor looks to see the breaking day
> Across the mournful marbles play!
> Who hath not learned in hours of faith
> The truth, to flesh and sense unknown,
> *That Life is ever Lord of Death.*"

Shall this temple we dedicate to-day outlast the builders of it, and the worshippers now gathered in it? Barry Cornwall asks, "Where is Shakspeare's imagination, Bacon's learning, Galileo's dream? Where is the sweet fancy of Sidney, the airy spirit of Fletcher, and Milton's thought?" And then adds, "Methinks such things should not die and dissipate, when a hair can live for centuries, and a brick of Egypt will last for a thousand years. I am content to believe that the mind of man somehow survives his clay."

It were better, however, — so at least it

seems to our poor mortal judgments, — that the soul should perish with its clay, than be raised into an existence of interminable sin and suffering.

Resurgam, I have said, is written on everything. Is not Salvation written near it everywhere; or does not one involve the other? Things are saved to be raised, and raised to be saved. All the laws of Nature converge in the one law which makes alive and makes life useful. Shall we, then, I again ask, trust this law in the lower and material sphere, and then, by our doubts, deny its existence and its success in the higher? I must quote Browning once more: —

> "What, my soul, see thus far and no farther? When doors, great and small,
> Nine-and-ninety flew ope at our touch, should the hundredth appall?
> In the least things have faith, yet distrust in the greatest of all."

Jesus said to his disciples, "Gather up the fragments that nothing be lost." This, I repeat, is what Nature does; does law in the moral and spiritual realms do less? If those

crumbs had been left on the ground Nature would have gathered them all and dined upon them. Jesus was practical, as his religion is, and he used this opportunity, we may suppose, to give a needed lesson in frugality; but was there not, as in other instances, a double meaning in his words, one material and the other spiritual? Did not he design to teach through this utterance that economy is a cardinal principle throughout the divine government, and that he had himself come to gather up the broken, scattered fragments of mankind, that not one soul among uncounted millions shall be finally lost?

"Behold we know not anything;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last — far off — at last to all,
And every winter turn to spring."

II.

GOD'S FELLOW-LABORERS.

We are God's fellow-workers. — 1 Cor. iii. 9.

THE well-known picture gallery in Washington has, among other fine paintings, a particularly striking one which is, or may be, called "The Little Helper." It attracts attention and tells its pretty story at a glance.

A grandfather and his little granddaughter have taken seats side by side in a row-boat, lying at the shore, in preparation for a morning's ride on the lake, or river; perhaps for business, perhaps for pleasure. He is a robust, happy-faced fisherman of some sort, we may imagine, in short sleeves and slouch hat, and with a short clay-pipe in his mouth; she is a round, rosy-cheeked peasant girl of half a dozen summers, in a white cap so much like a woman's that it gives her an older look. He has grasped with both of his very large hands

a very large oar, and is pulling the boat away; she, watching his motions, has laid her tiny hands on the oar close to his, in the evident belief that she is helping him. And she is helping him. Though the oar appears like a log under her fingers, and she can only place them on the top of it, she doubtless pulls something more than the weight of them. But if she renders no physical assistance, the smile in the grandfather's countenance, as he looks down admiringly and proudly upon her, is proof that her presence is an inspiration to him, and is putting as much strength into his arm as pleasure into his heart. One hardly knows which to praise more, her simple faith that she is doing something, or his loving recognition of this faith. The beauty he sees in her face makes, we assume, everything about him more beautiful; the lovely morning is lovelier for her sake; the picture of shore and water, of woods and fields, gathers color from her eyes and lips.

I might preach a whole sermon on this thought, — the helpfulness of little children;

showing how their small hands strengthen our larger ones; how the hard labors of life are softened when done for children's sake and blessed with children's smiles. Alas! how many large hands have let go the oar in despair, because the smaller ones were missed there! But it was not for this that my illustration was called. I wanted to make the fact as plain as possible, that every person in this world is, or may be, a helper of God; or, as the text says, that we are "God's fellow-workers."

We smile at the child's simplicity in placing her little hands on the oar beside a great, strong man's; and what are our hands in contrast with the Almighty's? The grandfather was able to row his boat alone; he needed no helper, not even a little one. And the little one is so little, why should she be noticed or counted at all?

We did not aid the Almighty in creating the world; can we render any assistance in governing it? Is it not presumptuous to seek, or to offer, or to wish to lay our hands on the oar at the side of his; to

even think that we may be helping him? If every human being were swept away into non-existence again, would not the world go round and the sun and stars keep their places just the same? Yes; but the face of the earth would soon cease to be the same. Strip the earth of all that man has added to it, planted in it, and scattered over it; of all the changes his labor has wrought on its surface; of all the cities he has built on it, and all the things he has invented for it, and its appearance would be immensely different.

That man is here is evidence enough that he was wanted here. It is not irreverent, I must think, to suppose that man has increased both the beauty and value of the earth. He has caused the barren wilderness to blossom; made wells in the desert, and fruitful orchards where only briers grew before. Does not the diamond which human hands have shaped and polished, outshine that which Nature left buried in the sand? Does not the gold, separated and refined and hammered into such varied

artistic forms, exceed in attractiveness that which was dug in its native state from the mine? Is not Angelo's almost faultless, almost breathing statue more beautiful than the rough Carrara block?

Yes; but God, had he so willed, could have made gardens out of waste places, clear faces for the diamond, and crowns set with gleaming gems. So he might; but he did not. And why not? Because he wished to create man and leave something for him to do.

Can we not imagine, without unreason or irreverence, that God was lonely when alone, if he ever were alone? That it was a joy for him to create us, and a greater joy to work side by side with us; to lend us his wisdom and strength, to watch the unfolding of the powers which he gave us in the seed? Is it not possible and reasonable to think of him as being pleased with the improvements which have sprung up here under human supervision, and with the advances men have made in education, art, science, liberty, and religion

since the world began? God takes more delight, we dare to believe, in permitting us to work with him, than in doing everything himself. He delights in our simple faith that we are helping him; or shall I say, that our simple faith is itself our greatest help to him?

But if we have assumed too much in imagining that God is at all helped by us in any way, we must stand on sure ground in saying that he allows us to be his fellow-laborers, for the reason that it helps us, — helps us to grow strong, to develop whatever powers we possess. To do nothing is to be nothing. Every person is the greater whose greatness is the fruit of his own efforts. To be carried through the world on the shoulders of inherited wealth or inherited reputation, is to be left helpless at last, unfit for this life or for the life to come. We cry out bitterly at times against the necessity of toil, but it is through this that the things we most desire are achieved. If God should answer our prayer for continued idleness, we

should soon begin a more earnest petition for something to do. "The gods," said Epicharmus, "sell everything good for labor." God was, and is, a worker, — a perpetual worker. Who believes now that he completed his labor in seven ordinary days, — or in seven ages, or cycles, — and has ever since sat with folded hands, merely watching the whirl and march of things he set in motion? He is creating still; in the heavens and among men; in human history and human society. He is even now bringing order out of chaos; enthroning truth and exiling falsehood; breaking the chains of slavery; separating chaff from wheat, in thought, in civil laws, and in religion; restraining intemperance and war; enlightening the ignorant and laying out plans for the wise; planting schools, asylums, hospitals, and churches. And in all this he is pleased to allow, to persuade, to command us to be his fellow-laborers. It is impossible for us to dissolve the partnership, if we would; and would we, if we could?

And hence Society, Government, and everything pertaining to them, Art, Science, Invention, and Religion are in a large degree a combination of divine work and human work.

We point with rational pride to the cities we have built, the ships we have launched, the commerce we have created; but the ground was here to build on and the material to build with; the water was here to float our ships on. The engine which Fulton invented and constructed would have been useless had he not borrowed wood and coal of the Almighty to supply it with the necessary heat. God gave the law and the materials, and Morse formed the telegraph. Hence in making the telegraph man was a fellow-worker with God.

We are bold enough to affirm, some of us, that the civilization of these United States is, or is soon destined to be, superior to any in the Old World. And for what cause have we made such unparalleled advances? Let us not be vain enough to assign the whole reason for it to our superior

wisdom and enterprise; for much of it comes from the singular natural advantages of the country, — from its unlimited territory; from the variety and richness of its soils; and from its healthful and invigorating climates. Even Americans, if they had the unwisdom to attempt it, could not build a civilization like this on the Sahara desert, or on the lime-hills of Judea. New England with all its economy and thrift has no farming alchemy by which it can convert its stony grounds into the fertile loams of Illinois and Minnesota.

A single German town has as many soldiers to defend it as can be counted in our whole country; and it requires as many, because it lies, as our country does not, in the neighborhood of other menacing powers. The Atlantic and Pacific oceans, stretching to Europe on one side and to Asia on the other, are a better protection than a million of armed men could be. The Almighty has done more to barricade our homes against foreign enemies than we have done.

A certain Englishman is reported to have said of Queen Elizabeth, that "Her Majesty counts much upon fortune. I wish she would trust more in Almighty God." This famous Queen may have trusted too little in Almighty God; she seems not to have been remarkable for piety surely; but she knew, what all successful rulers know, that the power of government rests somewhat in itself, — that heavenly wisdom must in such cases be supplemented, in part, by human wisdom. Oliver Cromwell covered himself with religious confidence, but he wore a coat of mail over it. His homely motto, "Trust in Providence and keep your powder dry," was neither irreligious wit nor human boasting, but strong Puritanic faith united with rugged common-sense. In Cromwell's case God seems to have been helped in his cause, as was man in his, by carnal weapons; but these, let us remember, — if they are even wisely employed, — are not the mightiest agencies in God's hand, nor in ours. Balls fired from the cannon's mouth penetrate amazing distances, and do

amazing work in our day, but ideas shot from a printing-press travel farther and win greater victories. The gun at Concord was "heard round the world," but not until tongue or newspaper had snatched it from the local air and carried it round the world. So, whether the work be physical, or moral, or spiritual, man is called to share it. Even the "word of the Lord" seems, in God's plan of evangelizing the world, to need a second utterance through human lips, and to be borne abroad by consecrated missionaries. We are sent; but the divine whisper in our ear inspires or impels us to go. Hence in preaching and maintaining the Gospel, in all educational and charitable enterprises, the divine and human wills join hands. It has been said that "God always favors the heaviest battalions." There is some truth and some error in this statement. Heavy battalions count for something generally, for much often; but God favors them only, and they succeed only — that is, in the end and permanently — when they represent a right-

eous cause. No battle is really won until it is won on God's side; no cause is settled until it is settled rightly. Those we have noticed who believed most in God, believed most in serving him. Even the Calvinists, who rest their trust so much on Election, work for their salvation as industriously as do the Arminians. Lowell says that the people of New England "feared God, and for this reason kept their powder dry."

In discussing the relations between every human being and his Creator, there is danger always of leaning toward one or the other of two extremes, — that is, of magnifying our liberty, and of reducing it to nothing. "Do everything yourself," says one theory; "leave everything to God," says the other. Each of these doctrines has half the truth; the whole truth is in the text: "We are God's fellow-workers." Jesus said, you remember, "My Father worked hitherto, and I work." Let us say "God and Christ work, and we work." Because they work we have courage to work. If we work with them our success is sure.

The earth is covered from end to end and from side to side with witnesses to the truth of the text. Behold the proof which the farmer's life gives it. The sower sows his seed, but he does not and cannot cause it to grow; his power stops with the sowing, and another and higher power begins. One act is fruitless without the other. Suppose, relying on his faith in Deity alone, the farmer withholds his planting — what then? Does Deity, pleased with this pious man's trust, bring the seed into the field and cover it? Even the certainty of the man's starvation and of his family's does not move the Divine Hand to perform the idler's task for him. And suppose the seed has been sown, and a bountiful harvest is ready for the sickle, and the farmer sits down with folded arms in his house and waits for Providence to reap and gather for him, — what then? Then the grain remains uncut, and is left to waste in the field. Suppose this farmer spends all his time in devout prayer even, — if one so indolent can pray devoutly, — and for this reason does not go into the harvest-field, — what then? The

prayer is not heard, or is not answered. Thousands of people, as sincere as they are foolish, imagining somehow that a kind Providence will feed and clothe and shelter them, or place money in the bank for them, without foresight or efforts of their own, have been obliged to beg or to starve. If David in his latest years had "never seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread," he must have included industry in his interpretation of righteousness; for we have mendicants in our day, — and descendants of noble ancestors, in some instances, — who have become so through no fault of their own except unwillingness or inability to work. It is true, however, that the righteous poor have a promise of protection not given to others. But it is doubtful if the trust in God-given bread by those who can labor and will not, is real trust; it is certainly a futile one.

God will do his part, and no more. Just where his work ceases and ours begins, none of us can very accurately decide. Perhaps it is near enough to the truth to say that he does for us only what we cannot do for our-

selves. Not because he has not the power to do more, but because it is better not to use it when we can be helped more by helping ourselves.

I have referred to the farmer, or the manual worker; but the rule is the same in all departments of labor, whether of the hand or brain, of the mind or heart.

"I have planted," said Paul, "Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." In everything, the sowing and to some extent the watering are ours, but the result is God's. And not observing, or not following these laws, multitudes spend their time in vain complaints of their unfortunate lot in life.

There is of course such a thing as misfortune. The calamity in Pennsylvania by which thousands were swept down to a sudden death by a resistless flood, was perhaps unavoidable. Persons wake in the morning and find all their property devoured by fire. Men and women struggle unsuccessfully against all sorts of opposition, fearfully mysterious opposition often. It is not of these I speak now, except with a word of sympathy

and pity, but rather of that larger class whose ill-fortune is born of their idleness and neglect. They left their seed for God to sow and their fields for him to reap, and now lament their disappointment. We can hardly call this, misfortune; except that it is a misfortune to have so poorly constituted minds. Let us at least delay our complaints always until we have met God's work with our own. My neighbor seems more fortunate than I; but is he really more fortunate, or simply more diligent, more prudent, more skilful, more loyal to the things which insure success?

There is such a thing doubtless as "good luck;" but much that passes under this name is only good care, good foresight. My neighbor has better crops than I; it is likely, then, that he has better land or takes better care of it. "I have had bad luck," says one, "for my store burned last night with all the goods, and the insurance ran out only four-and-twenty hours ago." Was that bad luck, or was it bad business?

To be successful in anything we must not only work with God but *as* he works. We

must find out what his laws are and act in harmony with them. The alchemists hoped they might discover a method for making gold, but they were wise enough to realize that they must first find out how Nature made it; and as Nature would not reveal the secret they abandoned the impossible task. A large amount of labor is wasted because it is unskilled, and against rather than with natural law. I knew a man who devoted his whole life to the effort to invent a "perpetual motion," as it is called; but as he and Nature never agreed, he only filled his shop with useless machines. How many have done much worse than that, — given their years to unlawful pleasures, to dishonest businesses, and found it all an awful failure in the end, because they had lived in opposition to God. Suppose we should try to turn the Mississippi river the other way, and expect to run our mills by the reversed power. Could we rationally throw our disappointment in the face of Providence, and murmuringly complain that our labor had not been blessed? If a young man lends his early years to frivolity and dis-

sipation, throwing away his best opportunities, can he in later life justly charge his lack of intellectual training to the unfriendliness of Heaven?

The best civil government and the most perfect society are the divine methods sought out and put into practice by us. And so God comes down in his spirit and laws and help, and dwells among men.

Finally our personal and moral salvation — What is that? How is it accomplished? "Save yourself," says one theory; "be still and let your Saviour save you," says another theory. There is some truth in each, and some error. Again, the whole truth is in the text: "We are God's fellow-workers." God sent his Son to save us; and where his Son has not been heard, other divine means of salvation have been provided; but if we refuse Christ and all other spiritual means, what then? Then we are not saved. We cannot be saved, here or hereafter, until we have complied with the conditions; and the sum of the conditions is that we place ourselves in working fellowship with God.

The Westminster Confession implies that our eternal salvation is a matter of divine foreordination; of a decree formed millions of years before we were formed. I agree with Calvinism here. I believe in foreordination; and foreordination should be a guarantee of our final happiness. But I believe as fully in free agency. How do I harmonize the two apparently contradictory doctrines? I cannot harmonize them, and no longer attempt to do so. I saw it all plainly enough forty years ago, or thought I did; but the mystery has deepened until I can only shut my eyes and believe without seeing. I dared forty years ago to give my solution of most of the dark problems in Theology; but my courage has languished fearfully on some points, while I have grown bolder in the use of the words "I do not know." I do not know how to reconcile foreordination with free agency; do not know that they can be reconciled. I do not know exactly how to define either. But if God be God, he foresees all things and provides for all things. And if man be man, he is not a machine. He has

some freedom. He is not compelled by a divine decree to lie and steal and rob. To some extent, at least, he can choose between right and wrong; and is responsible for his choice. He is not forced into either hell or heaven.

It should be remembered in connection with these reflections, that salvation in the Bible sense signifies salvation from sin, and not from punishment, here or hereafter. There is no Scripture to warrant a hope of escape from the penalty of a violated law.

I cannot read the New Testament and accept it as authority without a thorough conviction that Christ is, in some vital, serious sense, our Saviour; and that he saves us on condition that we repent of our sins — if we are old enough to have sins and to need repentance — and give our hearts wholly to him. He cannot save us until we accept of his offer, — that is, of his truth, and spirit, and life; nor can we save ourselves.

Suppose a man has fallen into the river and is in danger of drowning. You throw him a rope, which he seizes, and then you draw him ashore. Now, by whom is he

saved from drowning, — by you or by himself? By both himself and you evidently. The rope would have availed him nothing if he had not taken hold of it; and taking hold of it would have been in vain if you had not put your strength to the other end of it.

Now we have all fallen — according to the New Testament, and according to our own consciences, also, I dare to assume — into the waters of sin; and Jesus has thrown to us the gospel rope. We may lay hold of the rope, or we may refuse. In the first case, we are drawn to the shore of purity and righteousness, and in the Bible sense saved; in the second case, we are left to perish; to perish in sin, — not annihilation nor endless punishment. We shall remain in sin, whether the time be long or short, whether we abide here or go hence, until we accept the offered means of salvation.

Paul throws light on our subject through this remarkable passage: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Now the first half of these words is the doctrine of Free Agency; the second half is the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty. They begin by commanding us to work out our own salvation, and to consider the solemn uncertainty of our success; they end by assuring us that God holds the reins of our wills and actions, and that we can only fulfil his purpose. Does Paul then contradict himself? Apparently, on the surface, he does. So do we all when we assert that the Almighty rules, and also that every soul is endowed with the power to choose or to refuse. Granting the contradiction, what shall we do? What alternative have we? We may change the terms; we may say that God does not know all things, or that knowing is not foreordaining, or that he knows only what he decides or thinks it best to know. We may say that man is, and can be, no more responsible for his acts than leaves forced before the wind; or we may urge the proud assumption that he is free and mighty enough to unseat the laws of Nature, — to take the reins from the Almighty's hand and drive his own affairs.

But behold what a chaos in Theology this would create! If we dismiss the contradiction in this way, or in any other way open to our knowledge, see how many other contradictions and lawless propositions we invite to take its place! And hence, like the soul perplexed between the "Two Voices" described by Tennyson, —

> "In seeking to undo
> One riddle and to find the true,
> I knit a hundred others new."

It is perhaps consistent to be inconsistent in some things. Finite attempts to read the Infinite are but poor at best. A cup cannot hold the ocean. Possibly foreordination and free agency are not contradictions in God's mind. Far up in his lofty counsels, beyond the ken of man, the two may come together in perfect friendship.

At all events I must, at present, rest what little reason I have on both of Paul's statements, — that we are to work out our own salvation; and, that "God worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

And because God works in us and for us; because he created us and set his image in us; because our future was and is — even our endless future — an open book before him; because he delighted in our creation and loves to love us, to make us happy, to accept us as his fellow-laborers; because of all this, and more, I can believe that he has decreed that the existence of every human soul shall be finally crowned with glory and not with gloom. And I can also believe, humbly imploring divine pardon for whatever weakness underlies the pillars of my confidence, that, although God has conferred on all souls some freedom, — enough to render them morally responsible, —although he has given to all the power to sin and to repent, to accept or to refuse salvation, he has, also, through his inscrutable goodness and wisdom, foreordained the certainty that every soul which has not already found peace in righteousness, shall, at last, tire of transgression, and freely, willingly, rejoicingly, lay his hand in Christ's and be led into Heaven.

III.

OVER, UNDER, ROUND, AND THROUGH THE WORLD.

In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. — JOHN xvi. 33.

MANY years ago I knew a man who had been rich but was then poor. He had suffered other reverses. He was fifty-three years of age. He began life with much ambition and a stout, willing pair of hands; with good habits and high motives also. By hard work, close attention to business, and solid integrity, he rose slowly and steadily to a noble, influential position in the world, exchanging his lumber-camp in the Michigan woods for a fine mansion in Chicago. His excellent wife and three promising children, two sons and one daughter, made his home all he could have wished. He held State and city offices. He was a strong pillar in the Church. He was honored by all men. His

property, though large, was encumbered, and a financial crisis which came along took it, for a time, practically out of his hands. About this time his younger son, a noble youth, sickened and died. The other son, who had rare gifts, moral and mental, went to the war, and fell in one of the battles. In addition to these sorrows the father suffered a long illness; and still worse, submitted, through a surgical operation, to the loss of one of his eyes, which had been accidentally injured. And so this worthy man fell from exalted prosperity into adversity. Everybody pitied, as they admired him. Everybody said his "cup of sorrow is full." I often visited him, talked with him, but seldom heard him complain.

He had been accustomed always to attend our weekly "Conference Meetings," and to speak in them. His words here, as elsewhere, were sincere, earnest, and helpful. After his illness, he appeared again in one of these meetings; and when he rose, weak and pale, to address us, we all wondered what he would say, what he could say, more than

to describe his terrible afflictions. But strange enough he referred to these as briefly as possible; only to show the silver lining he saw in the cloud. "I have had," he said, "a bitter experience; but on looking over my life, it has, I find, on the whole, been wonderfully blessed. I have a thousand fold more to be thankful for than to mourn over. I have lost property, but this is comparatively a small thing to part with. My younger son disappeared suddenly, but he left me the priceless treasure of an untarnished memory; my elder son, who was true and faithful to me and mine, died for his country, and *what nobler death could he have died?* I have just risen from a bed of sickness; I appear here maimed in body; but I discover, on a careful count, that out of three and fifty years I have had *fifty years of good health!*"

He went on in this way through his long list of trials, casting a hopeful gleam on them all, and closing with the remark, that, "best of all, I have still left to me my faith in God and the love of my friends."

His speech almost turned our pity into

envy, causing us to feel, for the moment, that what we had been calling the greatest misfortunes of life he had proved to have been almost the opposite. We said to ourselves as he sat down, "Well, this man whom we thought the world had overcome has overcome it."

Another man whom I knew, not so long ago, a still older man, also the possessor of some wealth, an excellent man with a delightful home and family, who seemed outwardly very prosperous, to have in hand, or at his command, all that he and his could wish for, talked to me, during an evening I spent at his house, very despairingly of his own and of all men's lot in this world. The strain of his conversation regarding human experiences was so sad and unhopeful that he cast a sombre shadow on our feelings. His life, he said, did not seem to him less successful than the average human life; and yet he considered it a failure. Human society and human government seemed to him to have been failures. The majority of people paid more for life, he thought,

than it was worth. I left him at a late hour and walked home in a melancholy mood. The clear shining stars — for we see things through ourselves always — appeared as though they had heard the conversation, and were sharing my heaviness of spirit. What is life, I asked, as I moved on meditatively. Why do different persons give such different solutions of this problem?

I passed on my way the houses of the rich and the houses of the poor; I wondered how much of joy and of sorrow they contained, — how much trouble gold shuts out here, and how much poverty lets in there. How much do circumstances add to our happiness, and how much do they lessen it? Are our theories of life the fruit of our religious faith or of our temperaments? The world is here, at any rate, and we must do our best with it or suffer the worst it may do with us.

Our Saviour, who said, "I have overcome the world," was not rich. The poorest about him were not poorer than he. He had not what the beasts and the birds had

for a night's shelter, or a noon's meal. Where, then, were the visible signs that he and not hard circumstance was master of the situation? The storm of persecution was increasing, and the cross was drawing near. What wonder was it that his claim of victory fell as an empty sound on the ears that heard it? And when at last his followers gazed despairingly on his lifeless body; when they saw it taken down and buried, how strange and full of boasting must have seemed his words, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world!" The world had, apparently, clutched him in its revengeful grasp, and dragged him away from his work and his plans. Not in reality, however, had he been conquered. He had been forced by the mob and the spear into no retractions. The strain of crucifixion had not broken a single thread in his temper or his faith. In a death he should not have suffered, he showed how a great soul can suffer without yielding its honor, — how it is possible to be cruelly hurt by one's enemies, and not curse them, but to pray

for them instead; how lips pale with agony may breathe a prayer of trusting peace; how the door through which persecution has thrust one into eternity may become the passage-way of light from eternity, — light to guide and bless even those who least expect and least deserve the favor. If Christ's life did in any sense end at the cross, his example did not; his moral influence did not. His death multiplied these. His resurrection completed and sealed his preaching. Was he not then, after all, the victor? Do his crucifiers, or does he head the column of greatnesses marching toward us out of the past ages of Christian history?

It is not necessary to call up the perplexing question, which none of us can fully solve, why the world was not made differently, and so differently as to leave nothing in it to be overcome. Whether we can or cannot explain the fact, life is, we know, at best a series of self-denials; a struggle; a battle. It is born in suffering and reared in adversity. I do not say that it has no intermediate hours of rest and peace; that

its tears outnumber its smiles. Tribulations are thickly scattered along our ways; but they do not fill the whole of them, nor the larger portions of them. And tribulation is not of our own making always. We are torn as often by thorns we never planted; crushed by burdens not of our laying on. Our borrowed troubles are doubtless greater than those we are more glad to lend. We invite fears to come to our table and sup with us. We throw out our lines into all the waters and fish for evil, complaining when we have caught it. If the harvests, grown from our own folly and carelessness, were burned in the field, the world would be a paradise in comparison, but not by any means a complete paradise. The smoothest road we can travel in has plenty of rough stones, and the best feet are bruised by them; yea, the best feet are oftenest bruised. In some ways they suffer most who love most. Rocks have no heartache, because they have no heart. I heard Spurgeon remind those in his congregation, whom he supposed as boasting that they lived above all

suffering, that the marble statues in St. Paul's Cathedral "never have the rheumatism." Who says to me that the clouds of sorrow drop no rain upon him? Who, by reminding me of the happier future, intends to rebuke my tears when my loved ones die? Alas!

> "And thou, who tell'st me to forget,
> Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet."

It was not an imaginary cry merely which Poe put into the throat of the

> "Ghastly, grim and ancient Raven —

the cry,

> "Caught from some unhappy master, whom unmerciful disaster
> Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore, —
> Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
> Of "Never — nevermore."

"Nevermore" on earth to find his lost; or "nevermore" to have one day of health and freedom from pain; "nevermore" to gather from ashes or floods his life-time for-

tune; yet this "unhappy master," whose songs seem to have but one note, and that a mournful one, is, it may be, an innocent man; though not the most patient and believing, perhaps. To say that affliction is a penalty for transgression always, that it is a lash laid on our shoulders by the hands of divine wrath in all cases, is to say that Christ, who endured the chiefest affliction, was the chiefest sinner.

If it be answered, as it should be, that Christ suffered not for himself but for others, we say, "Well;" and wherein then is it strange or inconsistent that we sometimes suffer for others, and not for ourselves. To suffer for others is Christ-like.

There is, of course, a wide difference between sufferings we deserve and those we do not deserve. One is a punishment; the other is a result merely, — a result of blind infractions of law, and of unavoidable environments. Sinless trouble of any kind is the price we pay for living in a world not yet perfect, — for sharing the company of men and women who, like ourselves, were placed

here to work out perfection through the education and discipline got by surmounting the hindrances to it.

What is overcoming the world in the sense of the text? It is knowing and practising the art of living. And who but Christ shall teach us this art? And he teaches by example most of all. And hence our first lesson in life is seeing how he lived.

We learn also here as elsewhere by experience. But it requires more than all of life to learn how to live. "Art is long, life is short." Hume said, "While we are reasoning about life it is gone."

Death, it is sometimes thought and said, is one way of overcoming the world. Persons who have grown weary of life, of its cares and strife and woes, have congratulated themselves on the fact that it would soon be over. About the only hope in which many bear pain is that it cannot last. To a few — and we may wonder perhaps that the number is not greater — death is too slow for their impatient despair, and so they hasten it by suicide. But suicide is not overcoming the

world; it is quitting it only. It is confessing that the world is master. As a fence against suicide God has built in us a strong love of life. Though it is natural and rational, and not unchristian, for persons held down by sickness, bruised by misfortune, consumed by insatiate sorrows, to long for the quieting pillow of the grave, dying is not, nevertheless, overcoming the world. It is doubtful if the Saviour referred in the text to his death particularly.

Christ conquered the world through the Cross; but he had conquered the Cross through his life. His conduct throughout his short career, — his treatment of his enemies; his loyalty to God; his prayer in Gethsemane; the confiding trust in which he drank the bitter cup; the uncomplaining resignation he showed to the last, — were all witnesses of his mighty triumph. The test of any person's faith and virtue is not so much in dying well as in living well; that is, if it ever happens, which is doubtful, that one ever dies well who has not lived well.

There are at least four methods thought of, and adopted among men, for overcoming the world, besides those already mentioned. These are: Going over the world; under it; round it; through it. Only the last is successful.

An English poet[1] makes one of his characters ask another, How he expects to get "through the world"? He replies that he does not intend to get "through the world at all." "What is your intention then?" "To go over it." This meant that his theory for overcoming the world, was treating it with contempt; scorning it; trampling it under foot as though it were a viper to be crushed. This is the tyrant's method; the method of inordinate ambition and self-conceit. Men have tried pretty thoroughly to make life a mere grand highway to show their chariot wheels and display their pride. These have climbed as high as they could on ladders made of other men's too patient shoulders. To them the doctrines of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, count as nothing. They ridicule, or

[1] Philip James Bailey.

ignore such words as Sympathy, Fraternity, Equality. Shakspere causes Cassius to say of Caesar : —

> " Why he doth bestride the narrow world
> Like a colossus, and we petty men
> Walk under his huge legs, — and peep about
> To find ourselves dishonorable graves."

The Colossus, however, had his fall. He was slain by one who was successfully imitating his Emperor's example. The world that is treated in this manner revolts sooner or later, and strikes back. Society everywhere has its tyrants, large or small. We find them in politics, in business circles, in churches, and, alas! in families. Persons there are who claim such superiority of birth, or of place, or of influence, that they consider common people as little better than dust for them to walk on. Now a man who conducts himself in this spirit, whatever abilities or pretensions to ability he may have, is not a man. A husband or father who lords it over his wife and family, who uses his domestic position to deal out his arrogance and ill-nature, is not fit to bear the name of hus-

band or father. The disastrous consequences which always follow this kind of action, the discontent and misery it breeds, are ample proof of its folly and wickedness.

Far too many persons adopt a course directly opposite to the tyrant's; that is, by lying quietly down, and in a cowardly way permitting others to trample upon them. These, too meek or too weak to rule, consent to be slaves. They seem to think that an unresisting, passive life, if not the best, is the easiest. They prefer to remain at the bottom of society rather than take the trouble to climb higher. Their dispositions and intentions are better than the tyrant's, and yet they cannot be commended. A yoke willingly worn is not likely to be taken off. If the American colonies had dreaded rebellion more than servitude, their independence would have been indefinitely postponed. Those who suffer by the sword seem, in some instances, to have no remedy but the sword. Half the social and political wrongs men and women endure might be thrown off if the victims would change their indolence for an equal

amount of ambition. One-tenth of the population will be despots if the other nine-tenths offer no effective objections. Thousands who bitterly complain — and not without plausible reasons — of being kept down in the world should after all understand, that the pressure from above is much less, in most instances, than the weight below. Of course, if we wish to rise in society, we must, generally, thrust up our determined hands and push off more or less superincumbent tyranny; but we must also overcome our own gravity. The eagle that flies in the face of the sun is obliged to conquer the resistance of the air through which he soars, and also to exert enough internal strength in addition to lift his reluctant body. Why do we send our children to school; and then, if possible, to college? It is to prevent their becoming foot-balls for the world to kick about as it pleases. Our lumbermen, in rafting logs down the Mississippi to the Minneapolis mills, find these logs thrown out often, by the force of the current, on to the banks of the river, and hence are obliged to leave them there to rot, or to

grasp them with hooks and drag them back into the stream again. A senseless, irresisting log can do no more than to obey the waters that float it. We try to make our children something better than logs, — to build a force within them which can control in some degree the force that is outside of them. We strengthen their wills as much as possible with moral and religious principles, that they may be aggressive in righteousness and resistive to evil. "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Only strong minds obey this counsel.

Those who undertake to go round the world are Seclusionists, Anchorites, Monastics, Pharisees. Pharisees, as the name implies, are separatists. If one separates from the rest of mankind to live in a desert or cloister or select society, it is because one hates his fellows, or is too proud to associate with them in any way; or is afraid of being contaminated by them. Whatever may be the ideas or motives of such individuals, they are seriously at fault. We can respect the sincerity of certain pious men and women who

turn wearily, or contemptuously, away from society to hide themselves in what they suppose to be dangerless retreats; who honestly seek to protect their bodies and souls from the contagious touch of hands vile with robbery and murder; or even from influences of a less heinous character, though not unpolluted. But leaving the world behind us is not overcoming it. It is admitting our inability, even with God's help, to look it in the face and not contract its badness. And consider the selfishness of such a course. What right have we to save ourselves if it must be done at the expense of our not doing all in our power to assist in saving others! Is it not better to go down with the sinking ship than not allow as many passengers as we can take to get into our life-boat? Is it well to forsake the bed of our sick neighbor who sorely needs our watching, and forget his wants in selfish slumber on our own bed? Is not the man to be condemned, who, as an excuse for his lack of philanthropy, asks, "Am I my brother's keeper?" One feels sometimes that he would be glad to shut him-

self within walls so high that the outside cries of human distress might not overleap them; but would this freedom from care, this blank isolation, compensate for the lost joy of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, and letting our heart of sympathy shine for a moment into the darkness of the prisoner's cell?

St. Paul, it is true, speaking of certain corrupt idolaters, says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing." This was a warning not to participate in idolatry, nor to encourage it, nor to be responsible for it in any way. There is a sense, of course, in which it is proper and necessary for us to separate from evil and evil-doers, but no separation is Christian which takes us beyond the mission field where we can preach against evil and help to reform the evil-doers. God has made us all members of one human family; and to divide the hearthstone, — so much, at least, as to entirely break the current of mutual sympathy and helpfulness, — is fatal to the highest interests of all.

Jesus said: "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." To be *in* the world and not altogether of it; to be where evil is and help in lessening it, and yet be ourselves spared from it, this is what we may all pray for.

Let us, now, and finally, consider the remaining method mentioned for overcoming the world, which is to go "through it." It is hardly necessary to say that this was Christ's method; and that it should for this reason be ours.

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life," said Christ. Christ was not a despot, and did not attempt to use the world as a pavement for walking on; he was not a slave, to be bought and sold and forced into unwilling service; he was not a hermit, nor an ascetic, nor a Pharisee, and hence he neither forsook nor scorned the world. In the highest, truest, and completest sense, he went "through the world." His life was short in years, but long in its results. He retired for a time to the desert, for meditation to look over his

future, to study his office and mission, to count the cost of proclaiming himself the Son of God, the king of Truth and not of men; but he returned to the people again to face all possible difficulties, and execute the work he had silently but irrevocably accepted of his Father. There was after this no debate with duty, no concealment of his person, no faltering of courage, no sign of a plan or wish to shake off the infinite responsibilities he had taken in charge. He shunned the sin, but not the society of sinners. He appeared at marriage-feasts and at funerals; he took meat with publicans and sat at the table of private friendship; the "common people heard him gladly;" and Jairus, the ruler of a synagogue, sent for him, and accepted his consolations. He was a friend to those whom he rebuked no less than to those whom he commended. To whom was he not a friend? To whom did he refuse a kind word, or look, or hand? Sinning not, he did not overcome sin, but he overcame the temptation to sin. He did not escape tribulation, even the deepest. His

sufferings appear to have been as much greater than ours are as his susceptibilities were greater. His cup was bitterer because his sense of taste was keener. The nails and the spear hurt his body all the more because the soul they were cruelly forcing out of it was so extremely sensitive. He was transcendently human in everything except sin. Everything human interested him. He mingled with men, and showed no disposition notwithstanding their inferiority, of shutting them out of his sight or thought.

And how did the world affect Christ? It sowed no bitterness in him. Those who refused his love could not quench it. A blow at his kindness left a certain pain in it, doubtless, but no anger. When the storm of persecution was at its height and the agonies of the cross seemed inevitable, why did he not fly to the wilderness again and remain there? Because he had come on earth to save men and not himself.

The depravity of mankind did not darken Christ's hope of mankind; nor color his teaching with despair. He pursued a straight

path through the world, lived in and for the world, and died blessing it. He not only did not doubt that the world was worth living for, but he showed by his example that he thought it worth dying for.

In this life of Christ, then, there is a lesson for us all. He teaches us how and in what spirit to live. Our path, as was his, is one that leads straight through the world. He had his tribulations and we have ours. We learn from him how to avoid unnecessary troubles, and how to bear those which lie in the way of right thinking and right doing. We have our crosses, and the pain of taking them up and carrying them is much less than the dishonor of trying to break them under our feet or to run away from them. To have our faith strong, our temper sweet, our hearts pure, and our hands at work, — this is overcoming the world.

IV.

IN THE MIDST OF RUINS BUT NOT RUINED.

He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. —1 John v. 10.

IN riding through one of the royal parks, near St. Petersburg, Russia, our carriage was stopped before what seemed like an ancient ruin. The immense brick walls half demolished by wind and frost were covered with weather-stains and moss, and weeds were growing wild and rank in the courts. The contrast between this vast pile of crumbling masonry and the richly ornamented summer grounds which stretched away on all sides of it, was striking enough. It was like a mass of Death rising in a magnificent circle of Life. But we were soon to see a greater, stranger contrast. Dismounting, we ascended a flight or two of winding, rickety stairs, passed along some open corridors, and

entered a damp, narrow, dimly lighted room, in the centre of which stood a colossal marble statue; and imagine our surprise on discovering that this statue was an exceedingly well executed figure of Christ! The sight of this imposing yet gentle form, looking serenely, sympathetically, apparently, down upon us in the midst of these incongruous surroundings, filled us with a strange awe. We wondered that so perfect a work, by so distinguished a sculptor,[1] a work worthy to stand in the best gallery in Europe, should have been set up in this curious, desolate, out-of-the-way spot. What, we asked, could have been the object of offsetting the mould and dust and gloominess of this place with this pure, white, almost living representative of the Son of God? Receiving no satisfactory answer, we drew our own lesson, which was this: That among the things which change, Christ remains unchanged and unchangeable. He stands in the midst of ruins, but is not himself a ruin.

In respect to years, Christ may be called

[1] Dannecker.

ancient, but what character is really more modern? He is the Past, he is the Present, and who doubts that he shall be the Future? He was the greatest moral fact in the world twenty centuries ago, and so he remains still. No revolution has shaken him down; no mildew has settled on his name; no moss has crept over his teachings; no rust has eaten up his example.

Now, for this enduringness of Jesus Christ, where so much else has gone down and perished, there is, of course, some adequate cause, and what is it? The reason may be sought, in part at least, in following out the hint given in the text.

The name and influence of the Son of God continue to live because the things which make up the bulk of our belief in him are things which belong, in large measure, to human nature; which have their roots in human feelings and needs; and hence which belong also to all times, all generations, and all peoples. Our faith in the Son of God never wears out, because the necessity and reasonableness of it never wear out.

We believe some things on external evidence, and others on evidence in ourselves. We believe, for instance, that there is such a country as Siberia, but through outside witnesses wholly, if we have never seen it. If we have seen England we add to other proof of its existence, that of our own eyes. The witnesses to the truth of poetry, to the power of music, architecture, painting, and sculpture are the sensations of pleasure they produce in us.

We believe in geology, but whence come the demonstrations of this science? They are not in us; they are in the earth and rocks, where, if we wish them, we are compelled to go and find them. The botanist and ornithologist obtain their facts from the woods and fields, from foreign lands even. If we would meet the truths of astronomy we look not into our own mind, but away from it, — as far away as the sun and stars.

The truths of Religion are written and revealed in the Scriptures, and have, therefore, a historic element; but as their purpose is, chiefly, to affect our outward life by touch-

ing first the heart and mind, the heart and mind become the testifiers to their reality and presence.

That Christ once lived on the earth, preached the Sermon on the Mount, performed miracles, was crucified and raised, are, we assume, historic verities; but his teachings have little weight and are but slightly understood until our own experience tests and explains them. "He that believeth on the son of God hath the witness in himself."

Christ was born in a stable; not, perhaps, because this was the fittest place and divinely chosen for him to be born in, but because the crowds which had gathered in Bethlehem left his parents no better choice of lodging. He lived in a town so mean in its reputation as to incite the question, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" We have only a meagre record, almost no record, of his early years. At twelve he astonished the Doctors in the Temple with his wise answers; but he seems to have inspired no remarkable expectations among his neighbors, — to have said nothing and done nothing to lift his

name above others in his native village. He worked with his father at an humble trade. At thirty he begins to appear in public, to preach, to travel, and to do marvelous things. At thirty-three he disappears from the world, and as mysteriously as he came into it. All his life and works, therefore, so far as we know of them, were crowded into three short years. He wrote nothing, — nothing except with his finger in the sand on one occasion, and that no one but himself read. If all that was written of him by contemporaries, so far as we know, were collected in compact form, it would fill but the smallest primer.

Here, then, is the greatest of all his miracles, — that one whose childhood and youth promised so little, exteriorly at least; who resorted to none of the usual methods of securing power and fame; whose sun began to set almost as soon as it had risen; who left only his brief example and briefer sayings behind him, has to-day a name which is greater than all other names combined. What king has ever reigned as he has reigned and reigns? Before what sceptre have men bowed as before

his? What preacher was ever heard so far, and by multitudes so endless? What poet ever swept his lyre with such effect? What philosopher ever awakened deeper thought and invoked wider discussions? What leader ever drew after him such trains of wise and devoted followers?

Measured by ordinary standards, by such laws of cause and effect as we understand, what natural correspondence is there between Christ's origin and his career; between what he seemed before his crucifixion and what he has since become? If, then, he himself had made no supernatural claim, would not the whole Christian world have felt impelled to rise and make it for him?

Two thousand years have brought great revolutions and changes, — in Government, in Education, in Art, in Science, in Philosophy, in Religion, in human affairs of all kinds. Nations have waxed strong and melted away again; empires have risen and fallen; cities have sprung up and perished. Behold the growth and decay of opinions, the generations of ideas that have come and

gone with their owners, the world of theories and doctrines and speculations that have been overwhelmed and drowned in the floods of new knowledge! And how have these cataclysms in thought, these upheavals in faith, these shifting attitudes of argument, affected him whom the text calls the "Son of God"? Has he gained or lost in the midst of all this? Has any advanced scholarship, any courageous criticism, successfully included him in the intellectual and religious ruin that has been going on so widely and still continues? Has the maddest iconoclast destroyed, or even marred, his perfect image?

And think what this Son of God has resisted in all these ages at the hands of his professed friends, in the misrepresentations cast upon him by ignorant commentators and contending sectarists. The soldiers parted his garments at the crucifixion; and ever since then hostile sects have apparently striven to divide his precepts and doctrines; but he stands erect, spotless, intact, rising out of surrounding destruction and suffering none himself. Neither his worst fol-

lowers nor worst deserters have undermined his power.

I do not say that the New Testament is read to-day exactly as it was read in the Middle Ages, — that the greater wisdom of our times has thrown no new light on Christ's teachings, and brought no better meanings out of them than our fathers gave. The progress in religion and in Biblical interpretation has kept pace, it is hoped, with progress in general knowledge. I do however suggest that the changes here have been more external than internal, more in form than in spirit.

A careful distinction should be made between a belief in the Son of God himself and in the things about him. A fact is one thing, the explanation of it another. Our interpretation of it may fail and the fact still remain. An English author,[1] in discussing the science of History, rationally observes in substance, that real history consists much more in facts than in any man's opinions of them; and hence that it is better for the historian to

[1] Froude.

confine himself, as much as possible, to a statement of what has happened, leaving out his own speculations concerning it, for the reason that while the events themselves will abide unchanged the speculations almost surely will not. We have noticed that certain men, for instance, certain statesmen, philosophers, poets, and historians, once great in public estimation, continue so, while others decline in popularity and sink out of memory often. This is so particularly in the field of Metaphysics, — a field eminently fruitful of speculation. At one time it is Descartes; then Spinoza; then Kant; then Hegel; and then, after a time, these are nearly displaced by Hamilton and Spencer and Mill. As one luminous intellect rises another begins to go down. And why did stars so brilliant ever set at all? The reason was this, perhaps: that each shone chiefly with a local light; each was greater in his own theories than in the truth; and hence as human reason advanced, the theories gave way to others more sound, and these again to others sounder still.

The question has been widely discussed,

since Browning's death, — widely raised, at least, — regarding the probable growth and permanency of his fame. Those who assign a long life to it, an increasing influence to his works, very logically affirm that his poems, though somewhat obscure at first glance, abound largely in universal truths, — truths residing in and recognizable by human nature ; such truths therefore as human nature will carry with it into the future. The most popular book in this century — most popular for a time — was Mrs. Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Its popularity has however declined, because the facts of which she wrote, and by which she awakened such boundless interest, are no longer facts, that is, no longer existing facts. Her book deserved the fame it got ; it will keep its place in our libraries, I know not how long, always it may be, but it can never again rouse and fire the American mind as it did once. And so certain authors, books, opinions, ascend into notice, serve their time, and then retire. They expressed excellently well what was, but not what is, nor what shall be.

A curious illustration of how time wins the race over that class of facts, how what was true in one generation becomes fiction in the next, may be seen in front of St. Paul's church, in London. There is a group of statuary here representing Queen Anne and her subjects. Her majesty is standing on a pedestal in the centre, holding some uplifted symbol in her right hand; at the four corners of the pedestal, and beneath her, are seated and half crouching figures describing the countries, near and remote, over which she rules, — and one of them, in an attitude of humble submission, is America! America did once but does not now kneel to a woman's sceptre across the sea. So the stone tells a story which the stone has outgrown.

Among the marble reliefs on the Albert Memorial Monument in London, is a historic representation of a more enduring character. Seated or reclining near each other, is a company of the world's most distinguished poets, — Homer, Virgil, Dante, Chaucer, Shakespere, Milton, and Goethe. Homer, the most ancient of all, is most

prominent also. He is seated in the middle with a harp in his hands, and evidently reciting his poems, while the others about are bending toward him and intently, proudly listening. This means that the Greek poet is confessed there to be the finest singer of the group, — that he sang, and sings, for all ages and all peoples. The immortal bard of Avon is modestly silent in such a presence; and Dante, whose songs created the literature of Italy, bows his ear complacently to strains five and twenty centuries older than his own.

In another group, near by, Michael Angelo, surrounded by a cluster of famous artists, sculptors, and painters, and architects, is receiving the same honors. Cimabue, Da Vinci, Ghiberti, Raphael, Murillo, etc., are all faced toward him, and unitedly praising him.

Now it is hardly likely that Homer and Angelo will ever lose the positions granted them here; because the qualities by which they earned them are imperishable property, and will bring as much in any future market as they do now.

Along this line of thought we may find the explanation — the human side of it, at least — of Christ's extraordinary influence, of the extraordinary growth and permanency of his influence. He was armed, we assume, with a divine appointment; supplied from God with exceptionally superior powers at the start. The Son of God could not fail because he was sent and amply equipped by his Father to do his Father's will. But corresponding with the infinite power behind him, by whose authority he came and in whose name he wrought, he carried also a personal force which was irresistible. He lived a life as well adapted to all coming generations as to his own. He taught truths which reached back to the beginning and forward to the end of time; which education could never outmarch, science never put to shame, and other religions never encircle.

Curiously enough, though Christ was born in the East, he has had so far more followers in the West. His dress and his manners must have been oriental; his par-

ables and discourses were largely so outwardly, but the truths they clothed were wholly cosmopolitan. It has been suggested, and with some plausibility, by native oriental scholars, that the western mind is too cold and slow and unimaginative to overtake the meaning of the great teacher who spoke out of the heat and splendor and poetry of Palestine. It is possible, and probable, that those who have been always on the ground where the Scriptures had their origin, who have been reared in the midst of the gorgeous imagery they so freely employ, may have facilities for comprehending them not possessed by foreigners; but the spirit of these Scriptures, the internal thought of them, is as indigenous to an European or American, as to any child of the orient. Christ was no more a Galilean in the most vital things he taught, than the air which lingers around Nazareth and Capernaum can be called Galilean.

Here, then, is the essence of the matter we are discussing: There was at the centre of Christ's religion and example no localism. They had no more the flavor and color of

Judea than of any other country. They had no allegiances in Jerusalem and Antioch which barred their emigration to Athens and Rome. In seeking foreign residence anywhere, it was unnecessary to protect them with the form of naturalization.

A half-troubled surprise has always lurked in the minds of most Christians that Christ, when "one said unto him, Behold thy mother," should have asked, "Who is my mother?" Is there not a possible explanation of this apparent indifference — apparent only, doubtless — to the most sacred of earthly relations, in the wish of our Saviour to proclaim himself a son of Humanity as well as a Son of God; in the wish that all mothers and brothers and sisters might feel themselves related to him? Here, at all events, is the secret of our Saviour's influence; that he is alike the Friend of all; that he is, or may be, the bosom companion of all; and that all may feel this. We may go to him, and do go to him, when we have not the courage to go to our mother or wife or sister. We can tell

him our sorrows and troubles, as we can tell no one else. Tears we are ashamed to show in our own family we dare to expose before him. Sins we are too weak to confess in any other presence we lay bare in his eyes.

And the crowning wonder is, that Jesus is found in all places alike; that is, any soul, anywhere, in Palestine, or in Europe, or in China, or in America; in palace, or hut, alone, or in crowds; in ermine robes, or in rags, — any soul born into a belief in him and a love for him feels his spirit, and has a joyful experience of the moral strength and hope and comfort of his religion. So dear and so important to us is the thought that all the world alike owns his sympathy and shares in his love, that there is danger of a slight jealousy whenever we read that "Jesus loved Martha and her sister, and Lazarus;" as though he might have taken them especially into his heart. But special loves do not interfere with universal love; they help it rather.

Well, then, when the great teachers and reformers and philosophers and prophets

come together from all quarters of the globe, and from all the ages, to select a chief, — one whose wisdom combines and overtops them all, who is worthy to receive willing homage from all, — who shall this unique personage be if not the Son of God?

Shakspeare is more read, more praised, more wondered over now than ever before, because he wrote for the world; and the world must make a remarkably fleet race if it run away from him.

Has the song "Home, Sweet Home" lost one note of its sweetness, one sensation of its touch, since Howard Payne first wrote it? When will the ear tire of it and the lips cease to sing it?

I have thought often of the enduring influence of the tune we call "Old Hundred," which must be soon, if not already, "Old Five Hundred." Other tunes wear out, but this does not; nor do we grow weary of the four lines of the Doxology set to it. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow" — "Old Hundred," and its words, — I hope and expect to hear in heaven. And

think of the joy with which all will sing it when all have reached heaven! The last prodigal has returned; the last wandering lamb is found, the full one hundred — which are all — are in the fold; Christ has "delivered up the Kingdom to God," and God is "all in all." Let all the angels and all the archangels sing "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." And what is the secret of the longevity of "Old Hundred"? It is its power to find and to awaken and to stir the natural chords in devotion's soul.

How long the Bible has lasted! and how long will it last? It has kept its place in religious literature, because it took its place at first in the human heart, and has been a book for human nature to read. The person who forsakes it forsakes himself and his own eternal interests. It will fall out of use when man can learn no more of God and duty, and wants no more of faith; when he can walk without the candle of the Lord, and open whatever spiritual door he wishes without the keys of Revelation.

How long has the Christian Church lasted? Almost twenty centuries. What other institution has withstood the assaults of change so well? We have left some of its forms behind, and shall leave more of them doubtless, but not the Church itself, because we need it and shall need it as long as we live in this world. It will drop many a creed in its progress, but only to put its spirit into others. It will say Good-by to some sects, but only to institute others.

The suggestion which Froude applied to history has equal force in religious matters.

Christianity is not, let us remember, any person's nor any sect's opinions of it. The great theologians of one century are often discarded, if not forgotten, in the following centuries; for the reason that the following centuries think for themselves and think differently. In the fourth century, for instance, the brightest church light was St. Augustine; but how that resplendent orb has waned into almost darkness! The logic of American Christianity once resided largely in Jonathan Edwards; but it left him finally

and marched on so far that he and his reasoning now seem deserted.

But the disappearance of these suns from the theological horizon did not bring any sign of night upon the churches.

What changes have happened, and are happening, in religious ideas everywhere! None of us believe exactly, or very nearly, perhaps, what we once believed; we differ theologically as widely from our former selves as from each other; and more in many instances. But it is unfortunate if we do not believe as much as ever; if the new vessel does not hold the old wine. We have less faith in some things, more in others, than we had in earlier years; less in certain theories about the Son of God, but quite as much in the Son of God. Herodotus recorded his speculations three and twenty centuries ago about the building and purpose of the Egyptian pyramids; other theories, as foundationless as his, followed; endless discussions have arisen on the subject; and although the speculations and theories and discussions have in many cases melted into nothingness, the mighty

structure which was the cause of them still stands firm, silent, and mysterious as at first. So I assume Christianity survives and will survive all that is thought and said and written of it.

It is a noticeable fact that the Scriptures show everywhere a singular silence in respect to regular formulas of belief. It has been a subject of supreme surprise to most persons that the Saviour, particularly, made no distinct statements of doctrine; or, at least, that he argued and explained so little; that he did not, as most earnest teachers do, attempt to drive his sayings into men's minds by repeated hammerings of discussion. He left his truths scattered about in detached pieces, and not unfrequently in fragments only. Is it not better now, however, that we have them in this way, unencumbered, as much as possible, by such local peculiarities as future handling would have been quite sure to alter or rub out?

We have done, indeed, what we could not well avoid doing, since such a multiplicity of differing opinions concerning Bible teach-

ings have sprung up; we have made from the Scriptures, each for himself, a creed. But we ought, nevertheless, to keep in mind that the framework, the expression, in which we profess to hold the truth, is not Christ's but ours. And even the language of the Bible is, we may reasonably suppose, less inspired, when inspired at all, than the truths of the Bible.

And this leads me to say further, that the text does not probably mean, by a belief in the Son of God, any particular belief, — any belief we can easily define; certainly not any distinctively sectarian belief. To interpret it in a narrow way is to destroy it. To accord to it a sectarian bias is to assume that only one denomination has faith in Christ; since no two denominations agree in their form of faith. A half dozen, or a whole dozen, it may be, approximate harmony in their beliefs regarding Christ, and yet the distinction between them is deemed sufficient by them to separate them in organization and in regular worship. If we make room enough in the text for all these, and

yet no more room, we dwarf its significance immensely.

I do not propose to myself in this discourse the impossible task of drawing the exact circle within which a belief in the Son of God, in the New Testament sense of it, is to be included. Every sect must decide this for itself. I would only warn all against the too common illiberality; though I would have nothing more liberal than Christianity, nothing less. And there is danger of bigotry on one side of the question, and too much freedom on the other. In the well-known fable, the stork contracted his meal so much as to shut out his invited guest; and in return the fox, to get revenge on his parsimonious neighbor, spread out the food so widely and thinly that the stork was left hungry. We may be guilty of confining religion in a narrow-necked bottle, and therefore out of the reach of broader people; or, on the other hand, of scattering it so much that an equally large class is unable to make anything of it, to find it even. Where is the proper medium? I do not feel competent

to answer this question. I do not see for myself precisely where the true medium is. Belief in the Son of God means something; and something vitally important. I walk cautiously here, and so cautiously as to make it seem imprudent perhaps for me to venture on such uncertain ground at all. I confess to a fear of doing injustice to our religion; or to some of its sincere friends whose views have professedly a wider sweep than mine. The Christian scale covering the intermediate space here seems to me to be quite elastic, and that it may be safely stretched to a generous distance either way. The limit cannot perhaps be definitely marked even by those whose apprehension of it is least vague. And is there, after all, an absolute necessity for marking it? Is the New Testament itself rigidly precise here? Is it not enough for a disciple of Christ to simply believe in him, revere him, love him, follow him? Not merely to believe that there was such a person; that we have a true history of such a person; but that this person was "God manifest in the flesh;"

"the author and finisher of our faith." Believe in him so much, so fully, so earnestly as to be willing and anxious to be taught and led by him. Is it necessary to put our belief into any exact form? Necessary, I mean, in order to make our belief valid. Is not this belief capable of wearing many forms, —all the forms the different Christian sects have put on it?

I would not lessen, but would amplify rather, the importance of a belief in the Son of God. Its immensity appals our attempts to define it. Our conviction here precedes and outruns a clearly outlined reason for it, is indefinite or even more or less at fault here. Is not Jesus himself willing to spare soundness in theory and consistency in intellect, if he can have the whole heart?

Does not our text, then, signify, chiefly, by a belief in the Son of God, a giving of the heart to the Son of God? A child may love and trust its mother, run to her arms, make a pillow of her breast, and yet not be able to lisp one syllable of a reason for its action. Knowledge of theology, as explained by its

best teachers, is not largely distributed among the masses of people in or out of any of the churches; but by generous provisions in Christianity itself, the repentant, reverent soul finds ways of its own for reaching its Saviour, or for knowing him when it sees him.

I have a more elaborate theory than this I have mentioned, written out for myself, and wisely recommended, demanded even by my denomination; one which I am willing all men should see; which I am pleased on all fit occasions to explain and defend as best I can; and yet I should say here, that I do not regard my faith in the Son of God, in its most central, vital sense, as denominational. Take from me all that is distinctive in Universalism, all that is distinctive in any particular form of Orthodoxy, or in any denial of Orthodoxy, and there is yet left me my faith in the Son of God.

"O brothers! if my faith is vain, —
If hopes like these betray,
Pray for me that my feet may gain
The sure and safer way."

If a Catholic should say never so sincerely, "I know Catholicism is true, because I feel it and have a witness of it in myself," I should reply that the proof is inadequate. And if a Protestant should affirm, "I know Protestantism is true, because my internal experiences attest it," I should make the same answer. The Catholic and Protestant are both Christians; not so much, however, in the things in which they differ as in the things in which they agree. The personal pleas for Methodism, for Presbyterianism, Congregationalism, Universalism, etc., are perhaps of very uncertain authority; but the beliefs which form the core of these and all other Christian bodies, in which they all essentially agree, must furnish religious testimony of prodigious weight.

But what about those who have never heard of Christ? Such persons are not Christians, of course. But they are not necessarily bad persons. Pagans are judged, as Christians are, according to the light they have, and the use they make of it. God loves them no less for their being pa-

gans; and Christ lived and died no less for them. Heaven is shut against sinners, and not against those whose only fault was in being born in a heathen land. Whatever truth these benighted people have acquired from their wisest teachers, or through other channels opened to them by an impartial and universal Father, *is* a truth; and because it is a truth, a truth needed by the human soul and divinely fitted to it, has its witnesses, and close at hand, where the Christian has his. Christ himself taught a few things which pagans had believed and taught. Gems of truth lie scattered about the world everywhere; and they are not changed into valueless dross because unbaptized hands, feeling in the dark, now and then pick one of them up. Let us rejoice with Tennyson, that,

> "Truth is born
> Beyond the polar gleam forlorn,
> Or in the gateways of the morn."

A noble sentiment cherished or a noble deed done by a Chinaman or Hindoo or Feejee, is as pleasing to God, and should be

to us, as when the same thing ornaments a Christian's life. We wear a diamond, and why not a pure thought as well, though it come from the "darkest Africa"?

Jesus could not have been the Saviour of all men had not his religion been as broad as all men; had he not been able to see the good as well as the evil in all men; and to accept the former as kindly as he condemned the latter.

If Christ taught and lived a religion boundless in breadth and universal in fitness, it was of course a religion in operation before his birth. What he himself had to do with it, if anything, before his birth is another question. A curtain drops here behind which I do not hope to look. Whether he really existed before, or only in the thought and plan of God, — the latter seems more probable, — is not important as touching the matter in hand. In either case, human nature and love and faith and sin and righteousness and repentance and salvation and immortality were the same previous to the great event in Bethlehem as

afterward. Christ himself was new, — a new orb which rose over an old world. He illumined what was dark before. He made sin appear to the sinner more sinful; and goodness to the good, better. He answered questions which were asked only before. He was not God, but God reflected, "manifest in the flesh." He was a perfect man endowed with divine powers. He was the Way, in the sense of pointing it out and walking in it; the Truth, in the sense of teaching it; the Life in the sense of living it.

"Strong son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove.

Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they."

V.

DOWN GROWING AND UPWARD FRUITING.

Take root downward and bear fruit upward. — ISAIAH xxxvii. 31.

THAT all plants have both a downward and upward growth is a fact as interesting as it is inexplicable. Drop a seed into the ground, no matter in what position, and one part of it will strike lower and become a root, or many roots, while the other part will pierce through to the air and rise as a stalk or trunk. It never makes a mistake by reversing this order. The roots appear to love the dark ground, while the stalk and its branches prefer the light. We exhaust pretty much all our knowledge on the subject by saying that these opposite tendencies and functions in plants are a natural law; but we are able to discover some of the salient advantages of this law.

First: Plants live, in part, on the soil, and must therefore maintain a permanent connection with it.

Second: Plants live in part on air and light, and hence must come up where these can reach them.

Third: To stand erect above the earth, it is necessary that plants fasten themselves deeply and firmly in the earth.

The higher and larger the growth above the stronger must be the support beneath. The upper and under weight are evidently designed to balance each other. If the stalks of corn, for instance, have too little root, they not only starve for want of soil-food, but they lose strength and fall over, unable to lift their heads into the ripening sunlight. Behold the mighty anchorage which the oak has, that it may stand strong and defiantly face the fiercest storms!

If a plant be pulled up and its position reversed, if the stalk be buried in the earth and the roots left exposed to the sun, the former is smothered to death, and the latter are killed by heat.

"Speak to the earth," says Job, "and it shall teach thee." What do these facts which I have mentioned teach us? Nature is full of mysteries, and loves apparently to keep her secrets; but she answers our questions now and then, and the answer frequently helps us to a clearer understanding of moral and religious truths. Nature often lends her candles to the reading of the Bible, while the latter returns more light than it borrowed. The text is a prophetic interpretation of the law of plants, applied to our human relations and conditions.

Isaiah, considering what he called a "remnant" of the broken and scattered people of Israel, thought he saw a sign of hope in it. It was a seed left on the threshing-floor of war and circumstance; a seed, he believed, with latent Hebrew life in it, and which, if planted in favorable religious soil, might grow and bear fruit. "Judah," he says, "shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward." Now in pursuing the discussion which this very suggestive text opens, we may say, at once, that human life has its up-

ward and downward growth; that human thought and human progress should have their under roots to support their upper success. There needs to be in each individual experience, in the experience of Societies, Governments, and Religions also, a reaching to things past as well as forward to things to come.

First of all, every person who would live a true life and accomplish the finest results, must be firmly, deeply planted, solidly fixed in something, which serves as a support to his thoughts, desires, and efforts. A tree that is repeatedly torn from one spot and set in another, if it live at all, will have but a feeble existence and bear no fruit. A man is more easily and less dangerously transplanted perhaps, than a tree, because he possesses superior adaptedness to changing conditions; and yet the nomadic habits which the earlier races practised prevented great advances in civilization. An immense stride had been made in human progress when families began to purchase lands, to exchange travelling tents for stationary houses, and to

settle down in permanent homes. Any revolution in social and civil affairs which creates domestic unrest and frequent exchanges of localities among the people, with all the good it may bring about, works harm also.

The Discovery of America awakened Europe from a sleepy content, and put in motion vast tides of emigration which have ever since been flowing westward; and while great benefits, — immeasurable benefits, indeed, — grew out of all this, the breaking up of old homes and of old associations, with all the other unavoidable changes which followed immediately and remotely, must have sown the world on both sides of the Atlantic very thick with evil. The discovery of gold in California, though it created a world on the Pacific coast, and created it in almost "seven days," reduced its large measure of good by severing families, uprooting lives, and setting thousands and hundreds of thousands of people on a march that never came to an end. The constant drift of New England society into these western States and Territories, while it has built up the West, and incalculably

multiplied the activities and enterprises and wealth of the country, has had its damaging offsets in a wide unsettling of habits, thoughts, and aims. A roaming civilization can at best be only a superficial one. Institutions do not bear their best influence until they have had sufficient age to become thoroughly rooted in the spot they occupy. Our laws refuse citizenship to persons who have not been in the country long enough to form any real attachment to it; who have not in any way fixed themselves to its soil, and ways, and laws. The class of people whom our Government fears most, the class that makes fuel for mobs and shouters for anarchy, is not composed of our older residents, — of those who have homes in our midst; but of recent comers generally, whose staying-places shift with the seasons, and who have no foundations of their own to be undermined. And hence it has been, and is, a wise policy of the nation to induce as many of its people as possible to settle upon homesteads, to accept on easy terms a title in land; in the hope that this will anchor the

owners to the country, increase their interest in it, their love for it, their reasons for speaking in its praise and acting in its defence.

Alas for the church which depends upon wanderers; upon men and women who do not stand in it and grow out of it as trees stand in and grow out of the ground! Alas for the men and women themselves who have religious convictions and needs but no religious home, — no fixed abiding place in the church; who cannot, out of a tender personal affection for it, formed by close association with it, say "our church!"

We have regretted to discover that a considerable number of persons moving from the East and bringing church-letters with them, have neglected to present them here, and hence to replant themselves. Having severed old church ties and failed to form new ones, they have, in too many instances, suffered a serious loss of devotion, and of faith even. A clergyman in my hearing, at a public meeting, complaining of the slow increase of the churches on the Pacific coast, from the

cause I have just mentioned, said that a lady whom he was endeavoring to persuade to hand in the letter she held from a church in Massachusetts, replied that she intended to renew her church obligations as soon as she decided "to make the coast her permanent home." "How long have you now lived here?" he asked. "*Thirty years!*" was her answer. The evil of having been pulled out of our old place in the church is perpetuated to a dangerous length sometimes.

The question is seriously agitating one of our neighboring denominations regarding the itinerancy of its ministry. It is feared by many in that church, and by many of its clergymen, that the custom produces too little downward growth.

Our root-life, life below ground, is that part of us which draws its sustenance from the past; while our upper life, life above ground, stalk-life, is related more to the present and future. As the tree cannot stand erect and bear fruit, except it have support from beneath, so we cannot attain our best position and reach the highest results with-

out extracting life and power from things behind us.

The roots of the tree are covered; so are the roots of our lives, which run we know not how deep. The blood in our veins, the color in our faces and eyes, and the accent in our tongues, — whence came they, and how far? Our theories and doctrines, our hopes and fears,— how much of these have come up into us from the past? Philologists, like Max Müller, and others tell us clearly enough that the roots of our language extend back to prehistoric ages, — that we have had no new language since. The past is continually repeating itself in the present. Very much that is modern is but the ancient in blossom. Every people, every literature, and every religion has a history to feed its life on to some extent.

But our life is not altogether a product of the past; and it should not rely wholly, nor chiefly, on the past. Rising above its hidden roots, a tree draws sustenance also from the air and the light, from the summer dew and rain. So we, with our under-springs

of existence to supply us with vitality in that direction, gather substance and strength from the things of to-day. Out of the history that has been we make new and better history. We stand in the past and rise into the light and air of the present.

We too often forget, or ignore, this even balance of our relations, however, and fall into one or the other of two extremes; that is, of living too exclusively in the past or too exclusively in the present.

We have two words in common use by which we generally express these opposite phases of experience — "conservative" and "progressive." We should be, but are not always, both conservative and progressive. We should stand firm on something, be fixed in something, and, at the same time, reach up and forward for something. A mind that is wholly conservative is like a tree that is all root and no trunk; and one who cuts loose from history, from precedent, from old truth entirely, and has nothing to think of, to influence him, to steady him, but the present, — to whom the word "conservative" has become obsolete or a

mark for ridicule, — is like a tree trying to stand upright to enlarge its branches and make a fair show among its fellows, after letting go of the ground.

Our present age has been particularly an age of discovery, of invention, of new things; and hence there has been born out of it a spirit of impatience toward the past, and a blind longing for novelty. It has been enough, in too many instances, to say of any scheme, or idea, or doctrine, that it was never heard of before. The word "new" pinned to a clergyman's coatsleeve has advertised him as "a preacher for the times." Sermon-topics wrenched from their natural relations and set awry in the newspapers, have brought wondering crowds to the churches. But novelty ceases soon to be novelty, or calls for another and another change, until the taste for it palls, and old-fashioned truths become once more a relief. So the pendulum swings to one side or the other.

The error of making such a chase for new things as to leave the old out of sight is of course not greater than the error of being so

wedded to the old, so encased in it, so prejudiced by it, as to cause one to refuse any further investigation or instruction. If it be unwise to open the door so wide as to let all of the old truth out, it is equally so to shut it so close as to let no more in. Not all that is called "progress" deserves the name; but there is progress nevertheless.

And there are such things as fossils in society, as in rocks. There are fossil institutions, fossil creeds, and fossil religions, — institutions, creeds, and religions, from which nearly all life has departed. But even these may be profitably studied, since their deadness teaches a lesson we need to know.

It is a singular fact that the educated world is turning more and more to the study of antiquity. A select army of archæologists are besieging ancient tombs and mounds, and ruins and caves, in search of whatever scraps of information can be found there of the primeval races of mankind. An engraved brick or cylinder exhumed from the ashes of Babylon is read by these antiquity-hunters with as much interest, and profit perhaps, as

are any printed books of to-day. A handful of Pharaoh's dust or the sarcophagus in which Alexander lay, has to them a historic value as great as the mementos of the latest famous men. And their enthusiastic delight in such researches, with the wonder and pleasure their patriarchal findings create in lay-minds, must not all be ascribed to curiosity, for it is, to some extent, an instinctive looking-back to the ages and influences which produced us, and of which we still form through heredity a part.

Every religious sect in Christendom naturally and wisely assumes, and tries to prove, of course, that it has long roots, and that these reach back to Christ. Every Christian denomination is, or should be, anxious to demonstrate its "Apostolical Descent." This proof may, and does, differ in its terms and processes, but it ought not to differ in its reality. It is not necessary to lead the argument through the darkness of the Middle Ages and show every footprint which our authority left behind in its march down to us; but we must show — or believe, at least —

that the authority came all that distance along some line, and in some manner. This we may do, each for ourselves, without denying the essential Apostolical Succession of the other Christian sects. It may have happened, and probably did happen, that all the various Christian churches, which have Christ's spirit and have builded on his foundations, were provided by him with the proper credentials; one as much as the other. If, therefore, the Roman, Greek, and English churches insist on their "Apostolic Descent," I, personally, grant it; partly, however, on the condition that they grant the same to all other Christian churches. If they each hold this claim exclusively, they would seem to be guilty of a sectarian pride and narrowness which invalidate their assumption far more than their reasoning confirms it.

Any church may be rationally alarmed to find that it has not its roots fixed in the Sermon on the Mount; that it does not draw vitality from all the nearly twenty Christian centuries behind it.

But have not these nearly twenty Christian

centuries set the seal of falsehood on a multitude of its former beliefs? Yes; but they have also marked other beliefs with the sign of immortality. They have blown away and burned much chaff, but there is wheat left. If the past has established nothing as Eternal Truth, what ground have we to hope that the future will do better, — that there is any substantial truth at all? If religion so far has grown only chaff, when may we look for pure grain?

I have done my share of dissenting from certain theories and doctrines held by some of the Christian bodies about us; and do not wish now to appear to endorse them. Immense changes have taken place in religious thought; the orthodoxy of yesterday is heterodoxy to-day; and what is heterodoxy to-day will be orthodoxy to-morrow. The rising sun of knowledge and science is exposing a thousand errors, in the churches even, which ignorance once concealed. But with this admission to protect me against any misunderstanding of my views, I want now to express my conviction that the churches popularly re-

garded as orthodox, with some who are not so regarded, are rooted and grounded in eternal realities, — that they have established beyond controversy, beyond destructive controversy at least, the validity of certain religious truths and principles and doctrines; that these truths and principles and doctrines, inhering in God, and revealed through the Son of God, are as sure, whatever modifications in word they may undergo, to continue in all time to come to send their life into the hearts and minds of mankind, as the universal law of attraction is sure to keep its place. There are, then, certain facts in religion which may be considered proved and settled, — settled forever; and which are alike the inherited property of all Christians of whatever name. In our criticisms against human ignorance; in our discouraging census of the opinions which have perished, of the judgments which the higher courts of knowledge have reversed, we have been too apt to include everything that has been believed in the category of unreliableness. With Solomon's extravagance in saying, "Vanity! All

is vanity," we have watched the revolutions in thought, the passing away of creeds, the fall of speculations, and have cried out, "Uncertain! all is uncertain!" Not all is vanity. Not all is uncertain. If all is vanity, it is vain to think at all, to act at all. If all is uncertain, it is uncertain, whether anything is so.

If any considerable number of Christian sects have really, as is sometimes half intimated, by opposing judgments, been lured by false lights into fatal bogs, had we not better all follow and be drowned with them; for what hope have we of escaping their fate? If the pulpit has hitherto been but "a babbler in the land," who will dare to enter it again with the expectation of getting listeners? The flippant preacher therefore, who, in the wild ecstasy of a newly discovered truth, or what he deems to be such, rises and denounces all previous revelations; who takes up the ministry by first emptying it of pretty nearly all he found in it, demolishes his own standing-place, and makes himself the dupe he imagines all his predecessors to have been.

Jesus said, to be sure, that "No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God." Of course one's eyes should not be "looking back" at a moment when sight is more needed forward. But what is a man ploughing for if not to cultivate the ground that is under him and behind him? His object is not to destroy the field; nor to follow his plough out of the field; nor to turn just long enough to despise the field that has been prepared for seed. He will come back and plant and reap where he ploughed.

Paul says: "Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do if God permit." And this let *us* do "if God permit." "Not laying again the foundation," — once laying is enough; but it must not be less than once; and once laid the foundation must not be

removed. A single baptism for each person is sufficient. A single "laying on of hands" in ordination ought to answer even if the clergyman afterwards changes his church relations. We do not repeat the dedication of a church. One should repent as often as one sins; and one who is continually sinning should be continually urged to turn from one's ways; but the fundamental reasons for a change of conduct, having been fully explained, and being understood, do not need constant iteration. It is not doctrine, not knowledge, that most transgressors need, so much as a strong will to do what they are sensible they ought to do.

Yes; "leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us *go on unto perfection*." But this does not mean that we shall forget these principles; nor that we shall cease to use them. The scholar, though he began with them, and makes continual use of them, does not include the learning of the alphabet and multiplication-table in every curriculum of study he takes up. He would make poor progress, however, if he relegated them alto-

gether to the region of myths. And every new child is obliged to learn his A B C, and the primary principles of science. So every generation needs to be grounded in the "principles of the doctrine of Christ." The Church can no more dispense with the old doctrines than the school-house can throw away the spelling-book; than science can move off from its foundations. As beginners, learners, are coming from month to month or from year to year into the church, the necessity of preaching doctrines and laying down principles as old as the New Testament, is apparent; and the pulpit which shirks or ignores this obligation, is as sure to deteriorate in its influence as the tree is to wither where something is wrong with its roots.

But here again we may be warned against extremes. Too much time is spent, doubtless, in a few pulpits on preliminaries, — in parading authorities and fixing foundations. It is quite as important to understand what principles and doctrines are for, and to give them practical employment.

It is difficult to prescribe rules for preaching. The times have changed and are changing. New issues are coming up; and new ways of treating old ones are demanded. The preacher is fortunate, and his congregation quite as much so, if he know what to say and how to say it.

It is manifestly absurd for our denomination to be fighting battles that it won years ago; battles, at least, in which no enemies now appear. But its warfare is by no means ended; it has hardly more than begun. It must be as aggressive as ever, but not exactly on the same field, nor through the same methods. If we have grown high enough to be seen by the world, the quantity and quality of our fruit are equally conspicuous. The public attention we have gained by argument, we cannot hold except by something better. The longer we live the greater should be our strength, and the larger will be the demands made upon us. In travelling over Egypt what do we see? Very little above ground; but using a spade we find the decaying roots of a mighty civilization. What killed this

civilization? A worm at the root or blight in the branches? No matter which; either would have destroyed the other. In journeying over this country we pass many places where churches built in our name once existed, but have now disappeared. In many cases the body called a church was only an organized opposition to some other church, and hence when the opposition ceased the organization fell to pieces. It had no foundation; and with a foundation a superstructure so poorly thrown together could not have lasted long. It was a tree, not planted, but stuck in the ground merely; and what wonder was it that it withered! In some cases, however, it grew from a seed and grew vigorously for a while; but for various reasons, — for no visible reasons perhaps, — it bore nothing but leaves, and hence the community lost all interest in it.

The best sign that our church at large is growing, that its influence is rising and spreading, is its increasing aggressiveness in fields of practical work; in creating and maintaining schools; in securing a more

thoroughly educated ministry; in extending and improving its literature; in establishing home and foreign missions. The unmistakable evidence that Paul's conversion was real was his immediate question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The church that makes this inquiry is near the kingdom; the church that does what the Lord commands it to do, is in the kingdom.

The Catholic Church is strong in its conservative elements; it is proud of its roots, as well it may be, for they are deep and strong. The Protestant Church, without breaking with the past, lives more in the present. The Church of the Future shall be that which best combines the two elements. The safest course for the individual Christian is and ever will be to respect what the Church has thought, and also think for himself.

The truest manhood is that which has brought with it the experiences of childhood and youth;

"The child is father of the man."

John Quincy Adams said, in his latest years,

that he had never forgotten and never ceased to repeat the simple prayer his mother first taught him. He might have altered the words — though he did not — and kept the spirit of the prayer. Forms, creeds, and life change; but the thread that runs through them remains unbroken.

Our future spirit-life, what shall that be? We know but little of what it shall be. We may reasonably suppose that we take root downward here that we may bear better fruit upward there; that our life there shall be our lower life grown higher. Eternity must be time extended. We shall probably keep up our connection with this world through our memory, if in no other way. And our character shall, for a time, at least, bear something of the form and substance we carried with us from the earth. Part of our happiness shall come from the recollection of the good we did here; and part of our remorse, while it lasts, from the recollection of the wrong we did.

There must be some infinitely wise cause for our beginning life so far down in the

scale of life ; for our being compelled to make this short and perilous journey before starting on the longer, and we hope, pleasanter, easier, one beyond. If it had not been divinely ordered that heaven should be more heaven by coming after the earth and earthly experiences, we should have been first born there and not here. Why did not our Father set our inexperienced feet at once on the summit of the mountain rather than at the foot of it, and spare us the weariness and the danger of climbing so far ? What God's answer to these questions is we do not know. But we know this. The view from the mountain-top seems grander, when we reach it, in contrast with the narrower one we left below ; and our rest is sweeter because the climbing tired us. We grow stronger, as does the tree, by growing where the winds are rough. The relation between the two existences, or the two forms of the one existence, is closer, and more lasting, perhaps, than we have yet been taught or have dared to believe. It may be — it must be — that the fruit we bear in our upper life, whether it be

love, or praise, or joy, or noble deeds, though it comes to full ripening in a celestial sun, draws and will continue to draw a nourishing current up through roots that reach back into this world.

VI.

THE LORD'S MIRROR.[1]

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. — 2 Cor. iii. 18.

THE word "mirror," in its origin, signifies "to wonder, to admire." "Miracle" and "mirage," have the same source. We have grown familiar with it, and hence it no longer excites our curiosity, but the fact that objects can be so distinctly and perfectly returned to us from any reflecting surface, is really something to marvel at. Looking-glasses, as we often call them, are not so ancient as other objects which served a similar purpose. The first mirrors were, perhaps, only smooth surfaces of water. Our mother Eve may be

[1] Preached on return from a summer visit to Norway.

imagined to have performed her paradisal toilet, such as it was, over a glassy spot in one of the garden rivers. Narcissus, bending down to quench his thirst at a "fountain in a darksome wood," was astonished to see another face rise beneath to meet his own, exactly like his own; and becoming immoderately proud of his reflected self, as many another vain youth has done, was romantically punished by being turned into the flower which bears his name.

One of the most beautiful and most surprising sights in Yosemite Valley, at the upper end of it, in a grand opening between mountain walls of rock, is a bit of water known as "Mirror Lake." It is indeed a "Mirror Lake;" especially on a clear morning at an early hour, and when it is entirely still. Granite peaks, and whatever woody attachments they have, rising about in unsurpassed grandeur, including the lofty roof of blue sky, are so clearly reproduced in the apparently bottomless depths of this central pond, that the effect is extraordinarily impressive. Leaning over the margin of water one gazes

down into what seems a vast crystal abyss where reversed forests and mountains appear ready to fall. One feels in this position, as he looks downwards and upwards, as if he were standing midway between twin heavens, and twin skies, yea, and twin worlds; midway in a mighty perpendicular passage which stretches on indefinitely at either end. It is a spectacle never to be forgotten.

Longfellow, in some verses referring to the four handsome lakes in Madison, Wis., says, —

"Four lovely handmaids that uphold
Their shining mirrors rimmed with gold
To the fair city of the West.

By night the constellations glow
Far down the hollow deeps below,
And glimmer in another sky."

Effects like these attracted and delighted Wordsworth's muse: —

"The swan on still St. Mary's Lake
Floats double, swan and shadow."

And again: —

"By happy chance we saw
A two-fold image, — on a grassy bank
A snow-white ram, and in the crystal flood
Another and the same."

Mirrors of this sort, though not always so striking or so poetic, are frequent everywhere. We cannot walk far in the fields on a calm summer day without passing one. It may be a shallow pool which a brief shower left by the wayside; or but a drop of dew hanging to a spire of grass, or glistening in some tiny flower-cup, ready to be drank by the skies which for a short moment were imaged in its breast of pearl.

I remember sitting once on the eastern banks of Lake Calhoun[1] during a glorious sunset, and watching the enchanting delicacy and perfectness with which the overhanging splendors were imitated, in form and color, in the transparent waters under the shore. One might have hesitated to say which picture was the original and which the copy.

[1] A pretty lake near Minneapolis.

In my travels in Norway — a country universally abounding in fine natural scenery — I had continual occasion to realize the immense aid derived in out-door sightseeing from the water-mirrors spread everywhere among the hills, snow-peaks, and glaciers. Almost every rural object has a glass to see and magnify itself in. No lady in her mirror-walled boudoir has better facilities for the rebound of her charms than has beautiful Norway standing among her lakes and rivers.

The Apostle had of course witnessed these remarkable reflections in various places about the country; in the Jordan perhaps, or in Solomon's Pools, or in the Fountain of Siloam. He had seen his own shadow walking through the Kidron, or some other brook, while he was walking over it. The streams that traverse the Judean valleys, though generally rapid and turbulent, do occasionally pause in tranquil basins among the stones, making limpid spots in which to duplicate the banks and heavens. And Paul discovered in these effects a happy figure for calling

attention to the reflection of God in Nature, — in any and all of his works. As we see our face in a glass; as we see the skies and the trees and rocks transcribed in clear silent water beneath them, so we behold the face of God in the things he has made. It was not said nor meant that God is literally, personally seen in his works. We behold "with unveiled face, the glory of the Lord;" that is, wonderful signs, magnificent suggestions, and proofs of his presence. We see a thing when we have a mental, or moral, or spiritual perception of it. We may see with the mind what is invisible to the eyes. The temporal is a veil which hides the eternal. The granite rock itself is not so strong nor so enduring as the power of attraction which it conceals. The image in the glass is but a shadow of the real image; and what we call the real image generally, if it be the human face, for instance, is only a mask of the unseen soul. "Blessed are the pure in heart," said Christ, "for they shall see God." How see him? By feeling him; by being, in a measure, what he is.

The earliest worship was doubtless, and not strangely, a worship of Nature; because the mind could then think no further than the eyes could see; the reason was able to look *on* Nature only, not in it and through it. But the Pagan even, after a time, bent his knees to something unseen which the rude idol was supposed to symbolize. At all events worship is probably, almost certainly, a natural instinct, — as natural an act as breathing and thinking. As knowledge and reason grow, devotion improves. The mere stone or block, or mountain, or ocean, or sun, or animal comes, in the progress of religious thought, to be regarded as the outward garment of an indwelling divinity. Zeus and Neptune and Apollo are still fictions indeed, to a large extent, but they mark an immense advance from the dirt worshipper, and are indexes pointing to a nobler belief.

How much then in pagan worship is true, and how much false? It is not all myth and imagination. There is something in Nature, to all but the blindest devotee, besides Nature itself. The Indians said that Father

Hennepin's compass had a "spirit in it." And so it did have, — the spirit of understanding. So all but the lowest savage feels that the trees, the winds, the rocks, mountains, and rivers have a spirit in them; and the heathen is right in this initial conception, though the elaboration of his thought is necessarily feeble and fanciful. He instinctively recognizes the signs of intelligence in the things about him, but has not himself intelligence enough to ascribe a proper name and function to this invisible influence. Ignorant of the unity of Nature and of the laws of matter, and imagining that he discovers antagonisms at work everywhere, he easily concludes that the powers which reside in and over all things are equally numerous and equally unfriendly to each other.

The Christian from his higher ground, helped by Revelation and science, views all Nature as "parts of one stupendous whole," created and ruled by "one God." To him the lightning and the sunshine, the volcano and the summer rain, the flower and the frost that kills it, life and death, have one

and the same source, and this an infinitely good and wise source. He traces no contradictions and no animosities in Nature. And Nature, next to Revelation, is to him the mirror in which he beholds "the glory of the Lord." Moses met "the angel of the Lord" in a burning bush; less strikingly, but hardly less really, we meet a divine angel in every wood and field.

The poet especially finds something he half names a sentient spirit in the dullest clay. Nature everywhere is company for him; and is it not so to most of us? Do we feel quite alone among flowers and trees? Can we make a perfect solitude of the most secluded mountain or vale? We pity the unpoetic taste of Wordsworth's dull character to whom —

> "A primrose by the river's brim
> A yellow primrose was to him,
> And it was nothing more."

Wordsworth saw so much more in the primrose that he said, — and shall we not believe him? — that,

"And 't is my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes."

And this is what our own Lowell writes: —

"Whether we look or whether we listen
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten:
Every clod feels a stir of might, —
An instinct that reaches and towers,
And groping above kindly for light
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers."

And yet more: —

"I care not how men trace their ancestry
To apes or Adams, — let them please their whim;
But I in June am midway to believe
A tree among my progenitors:
Such mutual sympathy is mine with all the race,
Such mutual recognition vaguely sweet
There is between us."

God comes not in visible personality anywhere, but sends his messengers everywhere. And if we see no form and hear no evangel literally, there is to us a manifest heavenly presence in all places and things. Not permitted to look on the face of God, we may consider it better to behold his shadow only,

"As the sun in water we can bear;
Yet not the sun, but his reflection there."

Not to behold "the glory of the Lord," not to believe that we behold it in Nature, is to rob Nature of half its interest. The delight we take in picture-galleries, sculpture, and architecture, is derived largely from the personality that shines through them. Raphael's paintings are mirrors for showing Raphael himself. When we read the Declaration of Independence we read in it the minds and characters of its signers. Between the lines in Lincoln's Proclamation, which set free four millions of slaves, we trace vivid portraitures of the author.

In the city of Christiania, I saw the remains of an incredibly well-preserved viking ship, in use a thousand years ago, and recently exhumed from a large sand-mound near the sea, where it and its captain, according to custom, were piously and honorably buried together. And what is there in this boat, accidentally rescued from its singular grave, to hold the eyes of the traveller? It is a mouldy, blackened mass, quite perfect in form, but

covered from end to end and from side to side with pathetic marks of decay. And is this all? No; in this crumbling mirror we saw images of the old Northmen who constructed it, sailed in it, fought battles in it, brought home spoils in it. In such ships the Vikings made adventurous journeys to nearly all the foreign lands; across the Atlantic even, it is now supposed, to Greenland, and probably New England, several centuries before Columbus was born. Hence, as we stood gazing at this curious relic, we imagined it possible that its ancient keel had ploughed our waters and rested on our coast. At any rate, dead and solemn as it was outwardly, it was quite alive with historic interest. It seemed to take our hand and lay it for a moment in the hand of the Past, and we felt the blood of the old centuries pulsing through us.

And I may say it is one of the advantages of travel everywhere in the Old World that many of the things we meet there put us in close and fascinating contact with by-gone ages, — in communicative sympathy with the hearts and minds of other generations, con-

firming our relationship, even our blood relationship, with them. To visit a museum of antiquities is to walk down and back through musty corridors lined with the statues of our ancestors, and where our own steps waken echoes in chambers of forgotten history.

The power of any human greatness is shown in the influence it leaves in whatever it touches, or has been associated with it. A great man, for instance, puts down his foot on a certain spot of ground, or sits in a particular chair, or lodges in a particular house, and henceforth the spot of ground, the chair, and the house become famous, and are perhaps kept for show. In the Red Horse Inn at Stratford on Avon, you are pointed to the seat occupied by Washington Irving while there. At Hawthornden, in Scotland, the guide is sure to direct you to the exact place where Ben Jonson and his friend Drummond rested and talked. In St. Petersburg you will be shown scores of things which belonged to Peter the Great; including the log-house and the boat, both of which he made with his

own hands. In Berlin they have carefully preserved the most trifling articles possessed once by Frederick the Great — his walking-stick, his hat, his shoes, his finger-ring, and his clock, which was stopped the instant the heart of the king ceased to throb. In Washington you will pause with a strange pleasure to look at the military hat, and shoes, and sword worn by the Father of Our Country.

Greatness, therefore, imparts greatness to objects in themselves small and unimportant. It endows its servants with distinction. It extracts a flame of celebrity wherever it lays its finger. It transforms common clothes into coronation robes.

What shall we say then of the greatness of God reflected in Nature? Do we see the author in his book, the painter in his painting, the law-maker in his law, the warrior in his sword, and nothing of God in this great wondrous world of his? Do we look for the foot-prints of historic man, and ask if there be any foot-prints of man's Creator? Do we go to the Northlands to summon

before us out of their museums and viking ships and runic stones, witnesses to the existence of the old Norsemen, and to deny the glory of the Lord in their more ancient hills, fjords, and rocks?

Most persons go to Europe, it is presumed, to investigate and enjoy the works of man; and this is not irrational. As the fittest of all things, God chose a divine man to reflect his greatness. Earth has no glory like that which shines "in the face of Jesus Christ." Heaven has no mirror so perfect as his life. And next to the master is his disciple. To be a true man is to be the most this world can make or the next complete. "The proper study of mankind is man;" and the place to study him best is where he has lived the longest and done his best. Though I do not mean to say that man is greater and more interesting in Europe than in America. Nowhere else on the globe has civilization made such strides, in so short a time, as here. Nowhere else have great human possibilities been harnessed to such universal and practical uses.

To behold the glory of the Lord as shown in man's achievements in the Old World, one naturally turns, when one has crossed the ocean, after England and Scotland, at least to France, Germany, and Italy. I had travelled in these countries; and this summer I was drawn northward into Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. These are also old countries, and they are by no means bare of human creations or of curious antiquities; but if we except Copenhagen, their stores of Art compare but poorly with the South. If, however, one is in search of fine natural scenery, of one of the most wonderful combinations the Lord has made of land and water, of high summits, and deep valleys, winding fjords and mirroring lakes, dizzy steeps and roaring streams, dark woods and open fields, rugged coasts and dashing seas, single and clustering islands; yea, where

"The brazen mountains tower between,
With crag and peak and sheer abyss,
And many a shadow-hung ravine,
And many an airy precipice," —

let one go to Norway. It has no such mighty cataract as Niagara ; no river that parallels in length or size the Hudson, or the St. Lawrence, or the Mississippi ; no awful ranges of rock that equal some of ours. One does not need to leave America to find either grand or picturesque displays of God's creative power in Nature ; but I recall no country where a devout mind may roam about so delightfully and sit down to such rich feasts of imagination and reverence. Nor is the interest one discovers in these northern countries confined to the vast extent and variety of their natural scenery. The faces, habits, and character of the people are worth seeing, and studying as well. The people are like the hills and valleys and islands they inhabit. They mirror the rocks and mountains as their waters do. The blue of the heavens is in their eyes. They are as rugged as their coasts. They are near relations of ours ; at least the same blood runs in the veins of their language and ours. They love liberty and their country. They are sober-minded and honest. It is a pleasure to travel among

them, for they are courteous, gentle, and kind. They are neat and well, though simply, clothed. Their homes, even in the wildest, most secluded spots, are patterns of tidiness. We were glad to visit them, and sorry to leave them.

The rude log-house with its turf roof, single door, small window, and dim chimney cloud, looking down from its green perch up under the overhanging snows; and this same little house down in the valley by the lake or fjord, sprinkled by the silver spray of waterfalls, and looking almost as gray and mossy as the rock beside it; and the same again resting on the narrow margin of land beneath the towering shore-cliffs, and with an ocean outlook; and still again on the roadside, quaint and quiet and showing the rust of centuries, — this and the clean, blue-eyed, fair-haired folk about it, we shall remember as long as we remember the country itself.

But it was not my design to dwell particularly this morning on my journey abroad; not, at least, to give anything like a detailed

description of what I saw and heard. I intended merely to say that I spent the whole summer in close company with Nature; that I met little, and thought of little besides this. I never before lived so long, so completely, so intimately in Nature; never before caught so much of its spirit, nor yielded so passively to its varying moods; and hence I never before felt myself so wrapped about by a divine presence. God is not less in the city than in the country, — not less in crowds than in the wilderness of rocks and woods and water; but for some reason the gates before him swung open more freely this summer, and I seemed to stand nearer his greatness and to hear more distinctly his still small voice.

"For solitude sometimes is best society." And Norway is given over largely to solitude. The mountain barrenness is a frequent fence to human settlements. But in places here where man comes as an adventurous visitor only, to peep through the screen of secrecy, beauty and grandeur reign supreme. The fjords excel the galleries of Florence and

Rome; the rocky pinnacles overtop St. Peter's; the silences inspire as deep and as true worship as the thronged aisles of church or cathedral. To listen to the waterfalls here, one may quit the music of any human choir. To read at first-hand the history written in stone and glacier here, one may come away for a while from the lore of the British Museum.

Nothing has ever more impressed me with the power of God, the power in and behind Nature, than the fact brought especially and with new force to my attention while sailing along the rugged coasts toward the North Cape, — a fact discovered by geologists and familiar to them, — that a large portion of Norway, the upper portion particularly, is being continually lifted above the sea. The west coast line, as we could plainly see, has in the long ages which have elapsed, been elevated several hundred feet above its ancient level. And this upward movement is going on every moment! Every mountain and farm and house and river is constantly rising! Not rapidly, only two feet in a cen-

tury; but that is quite enough to fill one with overwhelming awe, if not with equal fear, at the thought of it! Often this summer I have stood at the foot of some lofty mountain, lost in wonder at the force which upheaved this single mass until its top pierced the clouds; the force also, which raised to the skies another and another of its towering fellows. I had many times before marvelled at the strength and skill necessary to build a cathedral like one at Cologne and Milan; but a cathedral is but a child's toy-house compared with one of these mountains. And yet we have here in Norway, as in some other places on the earth, not one mountain, nor scores of them only, but a whole vast country of mountains, and lakes and rivers and forests, slowly rising in the air! Behold here "the glory of the Lord." "Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?"

I learned this summer, though not for the first time, but more effectively than ever before, another lesson on the divine power ex-

hibited in Nature, from the Norway glaciers; some of which are among the most remarkable in Europe. They extend for many miles in places, and with a depth of hundreds of feet across high mountain-plains, and down deep mountain-gorges, breathing their icy breath over the green patches and glassy waters below. Almost the whole surface of Norway is marked with their ancient tracks. They have planed and polished the rocks in some spots, and ploughed and split them in others. The irresistible march they made across the country, and the ruin they wrought along their high paths, are witnessed by the moraines they left in the valleys, and by the scattered bowlders they dislodged and rolled down the mountains' steeps.

The fact is well enough known now, but almost incredible nevertheless, that these masses of ice even when solidly wedged between walls of rock, are able to crawl slowly forward. The glacier snaps its frost-fastenings as though they were brittle threads; tosses the interfering rocks before it, as though they were only a child's pebbles; it pushes

its elbow into the granite on either side and furrows it, as though it were soft earth. The farmer whose house and garden and orchard and fields lie across its way, watches the monster's approach, feels its near and nearer chill, hears the crash of stones its advancing strength undermines, but can invent no incantations to stay its progress or avert its intrusion. The particular glacier I have in mind and am describing moved forward two hundred and seventy feet in one year, 1870, and but twelve feet in the following year.

But why do I speak so particularly of Norway as a mirror of the Lord? It is only because I have spent the summer there, and because my mind is full of thoughts and pictures I brought away from it. The glory of the Lord is everywhere; and most perhaps often, in things and places the most obscure and humble. We travel far sometimes to hunt for truths which could have been easier found at home.

The ocean we crossed in reaching Norway and in returning from it read to us religious

lessons not less wonderful nor less useful than those to which I have referred. "They that go down to the sea in ships," says the Psalmist, "that do business on the great waters, these see the glory of the Lord and his wonders in the great deep."

We had a Sunday morning service on the ship and far out in mid-ocean, and if I failed, in my short sermon, to set forth the glories of the Lord as revealed in his Word, it was not because the place and the scene did not sufficiently stir my soul, but rather because my feelings strangled my thoughts. Our church was a ship, — a ship in motion, rolling, gliding, leaping through the restless waves like a thing of life; a wonderful thing, a mighty thing, and yet so small and frail a thing it seemed, in contrast with the ocean that bore it up and tossed it about, that we might have despaired of ever reaching the shore in it. How lonely and helpless our condition appeared on this vast expanse of sea, a thousand miles from land, with only sky and water in sight, and with only this rocking vessel between us and the fathomless

deep; but we sang, and prayed, and declared our faith in God, — in a God as near to us at the ocean's centre as to our friends at home.

The heaving, swelling, outstretching waters humbled our knowledge, and half paralyzed our thoughts at times by the awful mysteries they cast up everywhere; but the Almighty energy and goodness we believed we saw imaged in them, the voice of infinite love we seemed to hear rising out of them, helped to overcome our fear; helped to confirm our hope in immortality, — in a life which no accident can maim and no sea can drown.

And when, at last, through a merciful Providence, we walked from the anchored steamer on to our native soil, and looked about once more upon familiar sights, we felt, and we said, "God is here also, — here in our cities and hills and woods and rivers; here in our prosperous homes and free institutions; here in the noblest civilization and government yet born of man."

And then as I came up the valley of the Hudson and the valley of the Mohawk; and

finally as I caught, from the car window, glimpses of our own Mississippi valley; as the long panorama of autumn-colored woods, fertile fields, and pretty villages, was unrolled from New York to Minneapolis, I said continually and enthusiastically, "God is here; from the beginning to the close I have seen the glory of the Lord."

And now, standing here in this pulpit and looking into your faces, I see the crown of all my seeing, — the friendship and love which welcome me. Here at the end of my journey is the end for which I made it, — that I might come to you again; come with stronger will and nobler purpose; come with faith widened and strengthened by travel; come with wiser eyes to find what is best among those I love the best.

VII.

JUDGMENT AND VICTORY.

The bruised reed will he not break, and smoking flax will he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. MATT. xii. 20.

THESE words are quoted from Isaiah, but as it is Christ who quotes them, the prophet's utterance bears, on this account, a yet higher authority, — the highest known among men. Drawing them forth from the dust of very ancient and very sacred records, where they were doubtless half hidden and but dimly read, the Saviour held them up in the open light and reinforced their significance by repeating them.

The word "flax" in the text is what we mean by wick. Strands of flax were twisted together, immersed in oil, ignited, and used for a light. When the oil ran low and was not replenished, the wick of flax would smoke, and flicker, and

go out. The Saviour, who often put his teachings into some familiar symbol near at hand, seized upon this to illustrate certain depressed conditions of the human mind. It is not uncommon now to compare the vanishing energies of the soul in trouble, to the sinking flame of a candle or lamp. An inverted torch tells the story of death.

Christ thought also of a broken reed in this connection; or, rather, he saw the fitness of the figure he borrowed for carrying the lesson he had in mind. "God," he said, "will not *break* the bruised reed, nor *quench* the smoking flax, till he send forth judgment unto victory."

In this beautiful way Christ seems to have intended to announce the plan and purpose with which God governs mankind. The Divine method of ruling is, we see here in these words, *creative*, *preservative*, and not *destructive*. Its end is not to annihilate but to invigorate; not to kill but to make alive; not to break but to mend; not to destroy but to save.

And this law, it is pleasant to discover,

is apparently foreshadowed in the material world below us. In whatever path of nature we travel, we find all the gates securely closed against entire destruction. We meet finger-boards at every turn pointing to power and life ahead. We speak often of the decaying transitory objects which surround us; of the saddening lessons of change and death; of the fading flowers, of the waning moons, and swift-footed years, — and yet Life appears to keep Death at bay everywhere. The sum-total of matter remains; and the sum-total of power also. The waste materials are all taken up by reproducing powers following close behind. No strength falls but it falls into the arms of recreating strength. The sun is always shooting off his rays, but his quiver is never empty; the stars are burning oil always, but do not exhaust it. The winter holds in its frozen hands the seeds with which the spring is sown; and the mould of dead leaves feeds the hungry germs of new-born trees. The ocean gives up to the clouds all the water they ask for, and is rewarded for its generosity by showers and rivers. Nature

takes care that nothing dies which does not straightway minister to something else which lives; that no more empty buckets go into the well than full ones come up.

And behold how this preserving, maintaining law operates in human history!

The growth of the human race has not been steady and uniform, like the growth of the oak. It has been more like the plant that flowers in the autumn and then dies down, springing up again the following year. And even the oak rests from its growth while the ice is on its roots. Nations pause in their march, and even turn about; yea, and disappear on the road to nothingness, leaving only masses of ruin behind them. But the race at large never stops, never takes a step backward, never perhaps suffers any real loss. However crookedly and meanderingly the river of human history runs, it never reverses its course, except in mere appearance; it leaves individuals, and tribes, and even nations to perish on its shore, right and left, or it whirls them into dangerous waters, where

"Eddying round and round they sink;"

but the main current, deepening and widening at every mile, sweeps resistlessly on.

There was never a generation, it may be assumed, in which the human world was not stronger, richer, and wiser, and freer than in any preceding generation. The births have outnumbered the deaths. Wars, famines, earthquakes, plagues, floods, and fires have done their fearful work at various periods and in all parts of the habitable globe; but the population has nevertheless increased, and health has held its ground against disease. Insanity has not succeeded in capturing the citadel of sanity. Society has been everywhere besieged by the armies of disorder, but it has gained strength and territory. Civilization has, on all sides, pushed out its boundaries farther and farther, and its enemies are fleeing more and more before it. The fact that cities have, here and there, and in all ages, been eaten up by their own corruption, shows the hopeful working of this law of preservation. It shows the presence of a law that will not tolerate a dominating evil; a law which acts as a surgeon's knife in re-

moving cancers. When a nation dies, or an empire goes down, we have proof that their existence had become a menace to mankind; that their destruction removed a hindrance to their neighbors, yea, and may I not add, a hindrance to themselves also?

The point of our discussion is, then, that whatever happens to the world, the world is not, and cannot on the whole be, overthrown or pushed back. A bruised reed the world is here and there and everywhere, indeed, but not a broken reed. A broken reed cannot grow any more; but the world continues to live and to grow. There is hope in the flax though it smokes, for while it smokes it burns. The light in the world flickers at times, which shows that the oil of wisdom and righteousness is low, but God has promised that he will not quench the struggling flame.

Now how far can the promise of this text be carried? Has it any limits in matter or spirit, in mind or morals?

The word which the Bible places in front everywhere is *Salvation*. As Nature writes

the word *Preservation* in everything, the Scriptures imprint Salvation all about the world of mankind. The word *Condemnation* is seen often enough, — oftener than it is heeded or feared. It is written against every sin, every immoral life; it is written over the gates of drunkenness, on the door of unrighteous legislation, on every gambling card, on every blasphemous lip; yea, on unbelief, — for he that "doubteth is condemned,"[1] says Paul. But Salvation is the leading prominent word. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus," says the New Testament; and why? Let us read the rest of the passage, and learn why. "*For* he shall save his people from their sins." And now, not wishing to be irreverent nor to shock you, let me ask you to think of this passage we have quoted for one instant, and one instant only, as reading in a directly opposite way. "For God sent not his Son," says John, "into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." But Christ does "condemn the world," wherever

[1] New Version.

and whenever it sins. He condemns it, but not so much as he saves it. To condemn the world was not his chief purpose in coming into it. The disciples, James and John, offended on a particular occasion at the actions of certain Samaritans, desired to call down fire from heaven and burn them; but Jesus "turned and rebuked them," saying, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Now, in that very Jerusalem toward which Christ had then set his face, thousands of wicked people were afterward destroyed by fire and war; and the New Testament associates their destruction with their punishment for sin. Sodom and Gomorrah perished in a similar way and for the same reason. The Saviour, then, did not mean that the divine hand never falls heavily on the transgressor, heavily enough to slay his life, if his life has become a curse to the world; he meant only that salvation stands before all other ends, and that punishment, wherever and however administered, is intended as one of the aids

to salvation. The time was when too many Christian pulpits dwelt more on fear than on love, on punishment than on salvation. I have heard the story, but do not know that it was true, though it might have been, that the renowned Rev. John Murray, of our church in New England, had a neighbor clergyman of exactly the same name; and as the two names were often confounded, the community learned to distinguish them finally by calling one "Salvation Murray," and the other "Condemnation Murray." Now no preacher should neglect to warn his hearers against the penalty for sin; but every occupant of the pulpit should have, and should deserve, the reputation of not a "condemnation" but of a "salvation" preacher. He is a terrible preacher, indeed, who dwells continually and chiefly on the terrors of the law.

Until recently, at least, two distinct policies or theories prevailed in regard to the treatment of criminals. One of them might have been called the Destructive Policy, and the other the Reformatory Policy. One aimed at the punishment, the degradation of the

criminal; the other, at his repentance and elevation. The foremost thought in the public mind, in almost everybody's mind, was punishment. The officers of the law were ordered to bring in all the bruised reeds they could find, — which was right, — and to place them under a treatment that would the most speedily and most effectually break them, — which was wrong. In too many cases the treatment took on the character of revenge. "Let him," said the law, "be thrust into the darkest cell; let him have only bread and water; let hunger gnaw him, and the chains wound his flesh; let him have neither the light of the sun nor the face of a friend to cheer him." This was not generally meant for cruelty, but it was cruelty. It was inhuman. It was almost as far from Christianity as the avenging tortures of the red man are from the refinements of civilization. Finally, a few thoughtful, tender-hearted and yet wise men came along, and said, "This is not Christ-like; it is not even like the law of Nature." One of the most distinguished of these reformers was John

Howard. He went into the prisons of Europe, where men and women were treated as dumb beasts and worse, and said to the keepers, "Christ taught a better way of ruling bad men. These criminals must be punished indeed; but they should also be reformed, if possible. They have some good in them, and this should not be quenched." Hence a great reform began in prison discipline.

Men are understanding more and more that the whole story of God's law is not told, nor any considerable part of it, in the word punishment; that it carries in itself the idea of correction, redemption, reform; and that whatever purpose it may have in any place or circumstance, it should never be severe nor lasting enough to crush out one's spirit, to kill one's desire and power to repent.

I need not suggest that it is easier always to break things than to mend them, to quench light than to supply the oil for it. We can hang a murderer with much less trouble than we influence him not to repeat

the crime. The poorest horticulturist can easily apply the axe to any of his stubborn trees, but to make them grow and bear fruit requires patience and skill. The most ignorant and unfeeling turnkey can close the door on a criminal, after throwing him a cold crust and a colder glance; but to have some faith in this poor wreck, to believe he has a spark of manhood left which kindness may blow into a flame — ah! this is another and far more difficult thing.

The problem to be solved by all forms of government, from the State down to the school and the family, is, how to punish and how to save at the same time and in the same act. There may be too much or too little punishment. Solomon said, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son"; he might have added, "He that uses the rod too often spoils his son." The Puritans were firm believers in the rod, and what they believed they practised; but were their children better than ours? A certain noble descendant of the Puritans said "his father used to spend Sunday reading the Bible and whipping his

children." Was this the way to inspire the family with love for the Bible or reverence for the Sunday? The severity of preaching has driven multitudes from the church whom love might have kept in. And children have been brought up so strictly in many cases, that they refused finally to be brought up at all. The blow that was intended to break their bad habits, broke their spirits, their ambition, their self-respect. There is over-government in some families, and in some schools also. Hence the question is not whether there shall be any government at all, but how much shall there be. Where is the medium between severity and laxity? How shall children be corrected and not spoiled; and how let alone and not spoiled?

The same questions may be asked in regard to governing men and women. When offenses are committed against society, what shall the penalty be? We may say, first of all, in reply, that the offense should measure the penalty always. But this does not quite touch the core of the question. We cannot always estimate the quality and quantity of

the offense, and hence the penalty we assign to it may be disproportionably large or small. God can, but we cannot be exact in this matter. We can never be entirely just, perhaps. But the thing to aim at in every case is reformation. Some societies are over-governed, and so are some nations. Some laws wound more than they cure, destroy more than they save. Have you never seen a piece of steel which one was trying to bend to its proper place, snap in two? Have you never seen a candle put out by the hand that was trying to make it burn brighter? And so we come to the question again, and are always coming to it, — a question of the gravest importance, — how many souls society breaks; how many it extinguishes; and how many it improves in its rule over them?

You will at once see what bearing all this discussion has on theology; what light it throws, if any, on it; and whether it helps to decide whether this or that theology be the more rational one. Do the words of the text, and our attempted reasoning on them, aid in the least in clearing up the vast,

the perplexing, and ever-recurring problem of eschatology?

The Christian world has been asking for centuries, and is still asking, what punishment and how much does God inflict on all who violate his laws and come under his judgments? No definite answer to this serious inquiry should be expected, for none can be given. It is a subject to be approached with humility and reverence. The Almighty Ruler and Father of men has secrets here, as elsewhere, we cannot hope to penetrate. How much punishment any sinner deserves, and how much he is sure to receive, now or at some future time, the righteous judge alone knows. Two things, however, touching this matter, we all ought to agree in, — that all sins are punished here or somewhere, and that sooner or later every divine judgment shall be victorious.

Let us notice now particularly the last clause in the text: "The bruised reed he will not break, and the smoking flax he will not quench, *till he send forth judgment unto victory.*" Please fix your attention for a

little while on these two words, "judgment" and "victory." We may assume, I think, that with God, — not with us, of course, but with God,— judgment signifies victory, and victory judgment. There ought to be no ambiguity in the word "victory" when applied to God. With him it must mean the complete fulfilment of his plans, the perfect accomplishment of what he intended and intends to do. Now, if we knew what his plan was, and is, what he has undertaken to accomplish regarding the present and future destiny of his children, we could then see all that is involved in the idea of divine victory. But alas! we have only our ignorance with which to measure his infinity. Let us walk very meekly over this ground then.

But can we not safely believe, and rationally affirm, that God designed and willed to govern the world he created? It follows, then, that victory with him means that he has governed it. Can we not safely believe, and rationally affirm, that God designed and willed the righteousness of all souls? Yea, and the salvation of all souls? Was his gov-

ernment formed on this plan? Were all things arranged in reference to the complete execution of this plan? It appears to follow, therefore, that victory means with him that all souls shall finally become righteous and be saved. Anything less than this would seem to be so much less than victory.

The subject of eschatology involves practically these three questions: First, Will all souls be raised from the dead and endlessly exist in the next world? Second, Will one portion of the human family attain ceaseless happiness, and the other portion remain in ceaseless misery? Third, Will all souls have part in the resurrection and be finally saved?

The text ought to suggest answers to these questions.

If annihilation awaits a part of mankind, as many sincere Christians fear and believe, it would appear that the "smoking flax" in all these uncounted millions of cases must be quenched. But Jesus says, "God will *not quench* the smoking flax."

If uncounted millions of souls are to be raised into the future world only to sin and

suffer, how could the bruised reeds be more effectually broken? But Jesus says, "God will *not break* the bruised reed."

In conclusion, if God will not quench the smoking flax, then he will not cast the soul out of existence; if God will not break the bruised reed, he will not lay on it the weight of an eternity of woe. And if God sends "judgment unto victory," his judgment of all souls must finally end in their repentance and holiness and salvation. Nothing short of this can be victory.

A child has disobeyed its parents, and is judged and punished by its parents. If the child is still rebellious, the judgment and the punishment have effected nothing. If it yields, is repentant, and begs for pardon, then the parents have gained a victory over it.

It is a serious error to suppose that any law, divine or human, civil or moral, is fulfilled by the punishment or suffering of the offender. The law says, "Thou shalt not steal." But one has stolen, and has been sent to prison. But being confined in prison does

not satisfy the law; nothing satisfies it but ceasing to steal. It is the breaking up of theft itself that the law contemplates. Paul says, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Will you observe this statement carefully. "*Love is the fulfilling of the law.*" "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," "and thy neighbor as thyself." Now, being punished for not loving, does not fulfil the law. Only love itself can do this.

Jesus says, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, *till all be fulfilled.*" The law is, in essence, that every soul shall love God and man; and if this is to be certainly and absolutely fulfilled, it follows that every soul shall finally love God and man. Here, then, is God's final victory. Here is where all his laws and judgments and punishments end. This is what all his laws and judgments and punishments are for, — to fill all souls with love, and to bring them into harmony with himself. That this

"Consummation,
Devoutly to be wished,"

will not be the result of arbitrary force, hardly needs to be suggested. God's will in us is done through our will.

> "Our wills are ours, we know not how;
> Our wills are ours, to make them thine."

Repentance, to be repentance, must be voluntary. Love, to be love, must be free. The door of heaven stands open always, and whether we enter or remain outside depends upon our own choice. Character is not made and fitted like our clothes, and put on to us, but it grows out of us like the expression of our face. God influences our choice. He sets us down in the midst of redeeming laws, and sends to us a redeeming gospel. He gives to righteousness a beautiful face to attract us, and sin an ugly one to repel us; but he does not force us to admire one and hate the other. He says, however, that we ought to admire one and hate the other; yea, commands this and more, — he has ordained and prepared a moral system, which, while it sets bounds to our freedom in wrong-doing, is certain to win us over at last to virtue and holiness.

The promise that God will not break the bruised reed, and will not quench the smoking flax, is often an unspeakable comfort to us. And sometimes, when trouble is pressing hard upon us, we forget the promise or doubt its fulfilment. A reed is an emblem of feebleness. It is easily shaken and easily broken. "What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?" Frail and tender as we are, is it any wonder that things bend and bruise us so much? How much we endure and suffer, and yet live! How sore our heart is at times; and yet the love of life does not die out of us. God lays a great weight on us now and then, but not more than we can bear, for he knows our strength and our weakness. If we seem to ourselves broken and crushed, we are not. Through divine aid now or sometime we shall rise again. If the battle of life has gone against us, we shall win the victory on some other field. This is God's promise.

This light that burns within us, now low, now bright, now flickering, now wavering,

now rising to a steady, ruddy flame, what is it? The mind, the soul, the spirit, a torch from the Almighty, handed down to light this body for a while. It is itself a marvel, and that it never goes entirely out is a yet greater marvel. A gust of sorrow sweeps in upon it, and beats it down, but does not extinguish it; for a breath from heaven blows it into life once more. A sudden disappointment rushes upon us; our work has wearied us; our plans have fallen into ruins; death's shadow lies athwart our heart and home; and hope, which is the oil in our soul's lamp, seems exhausted; the flax smokes, but Christ has promised that it shall not be quenched.

VIII.

OUR DWELLING-PLACE.

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. — PSALM XC. 1.

A DWELLING-PLACE is essentially a fixed place. If one is travelling, he stops, or stays, at a hotel. He comes home to dwell. It is feared, however, that the mania for travelling, and the discontent it engenders, are, in our times, in many cases, making little more of homes than way-stations and hotels. "Living in trunks" has become a saying of serious import.

Some one, somewhere, in describing certain of our American cities, has playfully observed that "people stay in Chicago, live in New York, reside in Boston, and dwell in Philadelphia." Without endorsing this bit of clever humor, we may concede the nice distinction implied in those words. The repu-

tation for unfixedness which Chicago bore in earlier days, and which, in common with all the western cities, it may have deserved, does not of course belong to it now. The whole West was at one time a population of wanderers. The people were continually breaking camp and on the march. I can well remember when most persons who came West, came with the intention of returning soon; came to make a little or more money, with the firm resolution to go back and enjoy it in the East. New England people might stay here a year or two, or half a dozen years, but they must reside finally in Boston; New York fortune-seekers might make temporary sacrifice on the wild prairies, but they must take their quickly-earned wealth to their great city and live there. But much of the West is to-day as really a dwelling-place as the East is. This it should be. It is one of the grand purposes of civilization to create dwelling-places, to change roving peoples into fixed peoples, movable tents into immovable houses.

The man whom Christ healed was asked

to "take up his bed and walk." This is what very many of the people did, and were compelled to do. They took up not only their beds, but their other house-goods, if they happened to have any, their home itself, and walked. Our civilization has this great advantage, that, its houses being made of wood, or brick, or stone, cannot be transported from spot to spot, or from country to country. If they could be, I fear that whole communities and whole cities would often take up their all, "and walk."

Our civilization has another advantage — in the fact that it ties us down to permanent localities by the necessities of business. We cannot walk off with our houses, and much less with our avocations. If we make a journey to Europe or to any other foreign land, we are not able in most cases to remain very long, because the peremptory voices of our homes and business call us back. Our houses and our callings, then, signify dwelling-places; and dwelling-places signify half the things we live for.

It is quite remarkable that the Psalmist,

child as he was himself of wandering habits, should have caught this idea of a dwelling-place so long before its time. It was perhaps the want of such a place that inspired the conception of it. Tossed about from hill to hill and from valley to valley by the customs of the country and age, he doubtless longed at times for a rest and lodging-place as fixed as the rocks among which he slept at night and left behind him in the morning. The needs of his weary body and mind caused him to think, it may be, of the home and quiet he found always and everywhere in God. Paul said, "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." "Here," said David, "we have no abiding-spot;" but "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations."

The main thought of the text is religious, of course, but it suggests naturally two other thoughts. We may, at least, enlarge the discussion of the text so as to make it include the three words, or three ideas, of Country, Home, and Religion.

Religion is or should be, doubtless, the

primary thought, as it is the primary necessity of life. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Home and country should at least be added to our religious blessings. What is home without a country, or a country without a home, or either country or home without faith and anchorage in God?

Some of you will perhaps remember that startling story, by Edward Everett Hale, entitled "The Man without a Country." It was a romance; but it was drawn so cleverly, and in such natural colors, with such perfection and vividness of details, that it seemed appallingly real. It appeared in the early part of our late great struggle with the South, and hence at a time when the word "country" was in every heart and on every lip; when duty to the country was the foremost call in all our ears; when patriotism was felt to be the highest virtue, and disloyalty the greatest crime. It is some years since I have seen the story, but this is the substance of it. The man described in it had, for some terri-

ble cause offended the country, and been legally deprived of all its rights and privileges; had been condemned, like Cain, to wear a disgraceful mark on his forehead, and to be a fugitive, a vagabond in the earth; forbidden to even say "Our Country," or to claim the smallest, meanest corner of it as his own. A lonely, despised creature, he drifted from place to place, scorned by the ground he walked on, and stung by every object he touched. The picture created a wide sensation, and had the effect, doubtless, as the author designed it should have, not only to increase the popular enthusiasm for liberty, but also to suppress the nefarious plots of traitors. It left in the public mind a fresh realization of the inestimable worth of one's country, and the suicidal results of dishonoring its laws. There should, however, be no need of such efforts to impress these facts upon us. Think a moment of the utter desolation and misery one must suffer who has deliberately forfeited all claims to the land he was born in and lives in; who has traitorously turned his back to it, while depend-

ent on its air for every breath; who does not dare to open his mouth to speak to it, to ask it for bread or for a cup of water, or for so much as one of its stones to lay his head on at night!

But it happens, now and then, in countries not so free as ours, that one is expatriated through no sin or fault of his own. Among the wretched throngs marched to Siberia, there are some, it is feared, dragging traitors' chains, who should be at home wearing patriots' crowns. These are victims to

"Man's inhumanity to man,"

which

"Makes countless thousands mourn."

These are the exiles in law, or in the pretense of law, but not in justice. Dante was driven from Florence for reasons which should have given him the highest place in it; and which did, six hundred years later, erect his monument there. But the sufferings which tore the poet's heart, and stained with a martyr's blood every page in his writings, showed how deeply he loved the city of his birth,

and what the right to live in it meant to him. Hence it is that banishment from one's country is counted among the severest punishments.

It is not, perhaps, until one travels in other countries that he is able to fully appreciate his own; to feel the full strength of the ties that bind one to his own.

It is not necessary that one should insist always that one's country is, of all countries, the best. It is enough that it is one's own; that one loves it the best of all; that the roots of one's life are grown deeply into it; that the dust of one's ancestors is mingled with it; that one's holiest memories are entwined about it; that one's kindred have their graves under its sod, and that one hopes to sleep beside them.

Travel has its fascinations. It is no small opportunity, no trifling pleasure, to set our feet on foreign shores; to walk among the varied sights and scenes of the old world; to stand by its ancient founts of history, literature, and religion; to hold ourselves open to the flowing stream of information which

pours incessantly everywhere. And yet with all these before us, and all else that can be imagined, our eyes linger with tender fondness on the shores we leave behind; and when the last glimpse of them fades and disappears on the far-off horizon, we would not withhold our tribute of tears, and we cannot repress a feeling of sadness.

And during our absence, whether it be long or short, amid all the absorbing attractions we meet with, all the scenes that dazzle or enchant us, our thoughts wander back across the sea to the land we are proud and pleased to call our own; and when our face is homeward turned, when the ship is measuring off the slow miles that are bringing us nearer and nearer our loved America, with what joyful expectancy our heart almost leaps out of us! How anxiously we sit each night and watch the descending sun disappear behind the waters and apparently into the lap of the land we are thinking of! With what tender emotions, too, and blessed longings, we gaze at the stars as they come out one by one through the deepening shad-

ows to light the skies hanging over our distant home! Finally, what happier sight has greeted our eyes than the dim, low line of coast rising slowly on the horizon and extending its arms of welcome to us! And the whole journey has yielded few if any more blissful moments than the last one, the one which takes us from the ship and places us on our native soil again.

It is pleasant and profitable, then, to visit other lands; but to us America is three times worth them all, because it is our dwelling-place. That the Esquimau should prefer his ice-fields and polar hut to a Minnesota farm, that the Indian should scorn the advantages of Yale or Tufts in comparison with the wild woods and prairies, is not strange; that the Scot should love his purple heather, and the New-Englander his mayflower, is not strange; that the Italian sees nowhere so fair a sun as that which shines on his vineyards and hills, is not strange.

"Such is the patriot's boast, where'er we roam,
His first, best country is at home."

The steamer which conveyed us to Europe was a German one, and landed at Bremerhaven. Naturally a large number of the passengers were Germans returning to their old homes, — some for business, some for a visit, and some to remain. A few of them had been absent for many years. We had therefore, as the vessel drew near its destination, an excellent opportunity to witness an exhibition of the very strong love this people has for its fatherland. As soon as the low-lying shores came in sight, and even long before, these German men and women gathered in excited groups on the deck, and talked of the pleasure before them, straining their tearful eyes meanwhile across the waters in the direction in which the steamer was too slowly making its way. The tide having retreated, we were obliged to cast anchor a couple of miles out, where we were met by a small steamer bringing a number of persons and a band of music. This band played national airs as it came toward us; and the effect of these airs on the already elated German passengers exceeded any description one can

give of it. They embraced one another; they wept; they lifted their voices and sang; they were wild with happiness. Friends were on that hurrying boat, equally wild with love and greetings. Handkerchiefs were waved on both steamers; shouts went up from both like rockets of joy. The scene here and at the landing when these Germans stepped upon their native soil once more, we shall never forget.

And now nearly all I have said of one's country as a dwelling-place may be said of one's home. One's home is more than one's country. It is as much greater in value as it is less in space. The country is the immense outer circle, and the home is the small inner circle of one's life. Our one country has millions of homes; and of each of these millions of homes it may be said there is no place like *this* home. If it seems selfish to mark the spot where we dwell as the best among millions of spots, we may take refuge in the thought that all the rest of the world is as selfish as we are in this respect. Each one is better than any other. This,

then, makes not one spot, but all spots the best.

"Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there 's no place like home."

But whether the place we call home be humble or not humble, is not the question, — whether it be a king's or a peasant's dwelling-place, is not the question. Whether the house hangs high on the mountain's side, or nestles in the valley below; whether vines or icicles ornament it; whether England's or America's sun shines on it, — is not the question. We do not generally, in seeking a home, roam about to find the fairest piece of ground to settle upon. The locality selected is as often the result of seeming accident. Though least attractive to other eyes, it becomes the centre of interest to us. A thousand travellers arrive in New York from Europe in a single day; and leaving New York, they diverge in different ways and hasten to hundreds of widely separated homes. They have seen much of the world, sailed around it perhaps, and in what little,

humble, obscure places their journeys end! Yea, and what delightful, charming, wonderful places too; because love is waiting for them there, and all their heart's treasures are there. No temple their wandering eyes have gazed upon gladdens them like the humble cottage. They passed no threshold with so happy a heart as they have now on entering their own door. No faces they have met are so sweet and beautiful as these in the dear old home!

We have not then, after all, seen much of any country until we have seen its homes. London is not England; and even London, as most of us see it, is not London. The real London is hidden from the transient visitor's sight in the homes of the great city. There is where the great struggle of London life goes on, where its mighty dramas are acted, and where the springs are touched which move the feet and hearts of the vast throngs that fill the streets. What does one know of America who has glanced at it or studied it only from a car-window? The America we care most for, and depend on principally, is in its homes. The great West is not its

boundless prairies nor its golden wheat-harvests; its power and its destiny are created at its hearthstones, in its dwelling-places, where the love of home waxes stronger and stronger, where the sentiments of freedom and Christianity are taking root and growing into the country, deeper than the trees are growing into its soil.

Blessed are the souls who have a country they love, and love to live in; blessed yet more are the souls who are fixed to a single spot in their country, and that worth more than all spots beside.

But the centre of the two circles, country and home, is a dearer and more lasting dwelling-place still, — a dwelling-place in the Lord. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations."

I have said that our home in the Lord is the centre of the other homes spoken of; and so it is in one sense, but in another sense it makes a circle that sweeps over and beyond the others. Our home in the Lord we carry with us wherever we travel. As God is everywhere, we find him and live and rest

in him everywhere. "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. . . . God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." "God is love," says John; "and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." When we go to other countries, we leave our own country and home behind us. They are present henceforth only as a recollection. We say good-by for a while to our church and congregation. We see the faces of our dear friends no more for a time, except as shadows on the walls of our memory. But God is as much with us in foreign lands as at home. As we look up at the same stars at home or abroad, so does the face of God smile upon us from every sky. We have taken a last glance of our native shore, and turned to survey our narrow ship or the vast expanse of sea that has us in charge now; but He who holds the sea and the ship in charge is there, and our trust is there. We walk the deck with our hand still in his hand.

"Lord of being, throned afar,
Thy glory flames from star to star;
Centre and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart how near!"

We retire to our berth, and the distance from our pillow to God is no greater than between our last pillow on land and him. If storms rise and dangers threaten at any moment, we rush to his arms.

When Sunday came I heard the chime of church-bells, though not our own. I missed you and this place of worship; but the Father you worshipped on these Sabbaths and on this side of the Atlantic, I worshipped on the other side. I heard in some instances the hymns which you sang here; and strange enough, it may seem to you, I often listened to much the same sermons that fell on your ears and delighted your hearts. I witnessed differing forms of worship and heard differing sounds of doctrine; but it was unspeakably encouraging and comforting to me to observe the wonderful unity of spirit that held sway in the various congregations and various sects I visited. I did not hear the

particular text I have selected this morning preached from, but the soul and sentiment of it were everywhere announced.

One's country and one's home are always changing. America to-day is quite unlike America a century ago; and it will wear still another aspect a century hence. If Paul should return to Palestine, Jerusalem, and Antioch, he would not know them. If Franklin should rise from his grave in Philadelphia and look about, or visit his birthplace in Boston, he would recognize nothing that he left there. "Our country," then, is ours for a generation only, but the Lord is our dwelling-place in *all* generations.

It is sad to think of the transitoriness of all our earthly homes.

> "Mine be a cot beside the hill;
> A bee-hive's hum shall soothe my ear;
> A willowy brook that turns the mill
> With many a fall shall linger near."

These are what we once longed for, and these we possessed for a time it may be; but where are they now? The "willowy brook" is almost dry, and no ears are there

to hear its fainter "fall;" the "mill" is silent, the bees have flown, and the "cot" is gone! "Home, sweet home,"— this we sang and this we had; this we still sing, but no more have. One after another of that home-circle has dropped out, leaving a lonely if not a forsaken hearthstone.

"There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there!
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair."

We have, then, no enduring, no eternal dwelling-place except in God. He is our dwelling-place in all generations, because he exists and is the same in all generations, — "And thy years shall have no end."

When we sit down and reflect upon the changes which have happened to our earth itself externally and internally; when we think of the peoples that have lived their short day and disappeared, the kingdoms, states, and empires that have risen and fallen, — it relieves our melancholy to remember that the Almighty throughout all

this has remained the same; and when we watch the changes that every year effects, as we stand looking at

> "The innumerable caravan which moves
> To that mysterious realm where each shall take
> His chamber in the silent halls of death,"

our only comfort is, God himself does not and shall not die; as he dwells forever in infinity, so may we whom he makes immortal dwell forever in him.

And not only is our dwelling-place in God fixed and indestructible, it is also of all dwelling-places the happiest and most beautiful. What safety we feel with the walls of his power about us! No floods can drown us, no fire burn us, no enemy harm us. "For I am persuaded," said Paul, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

To die is to leave our country and our home; but living in God, we change worlds

without changing our habitation. We wake in the same glorious chamber in which we fall asleep. The same dear hand that closed our eyes will lay its soft touch there when it is time for them to see again; and the same light will shine into our resurrection morning that was shut out on the solemn night before.

The charm and happiness of home is love, — love given and love received. It is heart joined with heart, soul with soul, life with life. It is mutual trust and confidence. To dwell in God is to love God, and to know that we are loved of him. It is to have our thoughts, our wishes, our hopes, our life centred in him.

"Nearer my God to thee,
Nearer to thee."

IX.

BELIEF AND UNBELIEF.

Lord, I believe ; help thou mine unbelief. — MARK ix. 24.

A FATHER had brought his son to Christ to be healed. The case was one to excite pity. The lad had grown up in suffering. Disease and pain had been his companions. He had been even cut off from the power of speech. All ordinary means of cure then and there known had, it may be supposed, been exhausted. Only one hope remained,— which was to take him to the great Healer, whose name was on so many lips, and of whom wonderful reports were flying about from neighborhood to neighborhood. Coming to him in faith and doubt, — in more faith than doubt, — the man related a sorrowful story, exclaiming, " If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us and help us." Jesus answered, — and there is some mystery in his

answer even now,—"If thou canst believe! All things are possible to him that believeth." This must have seemed a hard test to the anxious man. It apparently laid the cure, and even the attempt to cure, on the father,—that is, on his confidence that such a thing could be effected. If he said he had no faith, he feared the strange Physician might make no effort to heal the child; and if he said he had entire faith, he would not be honest. What, then, ought he to say? What could he say? It was an embarrassing moment; it was a trying position. The poor man seemed to be standing on a precipice of disappointment, whichever way he turned. His simple sincerity saved him. He could not affirm that he had perfect faith, nor that he had none. So with eyes full of "tears," he cried, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief!" The Lord did help his unbelief by healing his child.

This natural and interesting piece of New Testament history lays bare some experiences of our own, opens a way out of some perplexities of our own. It is also another

of the many illustrations of our Saviour's kindness, of his sympathy with suffering, and of his readiness to help all who trusted him enough to ask for help.

And now who of us possessing the honesty of that man, and tried as he was tried, would not feel compelled to give very much the same answer that he gave?

The text has on the surface the appearance of a contradiction. Is it possible to believe and disbelieve at the same instant? It is possible to believe in some things and to doubt others, to have some faith and some doubt in relation to the same things. Sometimes our doubts and our faith are so nearly equal that we can hardly determine on which side the scale in which we are weighing testimony drops. If our belief is very strong and our unbelief very weak, we say we believe, without mentioning the unbelief; and on the other hand, if doubt takes the lead and faith follows reluctantly far behind, we necessarily proclaim ourselves as doubters, and say nothing of any exception.

There is always, and always must be, a

plain distinction between faith and knowledge; and where knowledge is impossible we should not expect full faith, or should not at least demand full faith; and if we have it, we may reckon ourselves exceedingly fortunate. If we think we have a clear sun, a little more magnifying power applied to the eye of our thought is likely to reveal a dark spot. The spot may not perceptibly diminish the light, may not shadow our daily life at all; but we will not deny that we have seen it, and that it is there. Only when we have passed from mere belief into positive knowledge are we able to exchange uncertainty for certainty.

I raise the question, therefore, — or the text raises it, — if there be such a thing at all as perfect faith. If it be perfect, is it faith, or is it knowledge with faith's name? Is faith ever strong enough to shut out every particle of doubt, — that is, in all the circumstances in which it is or can be placed? I do not affirm that it is not. I do not quite dare affirm, however, that I have full faith in full faith, — that is, in most matters pertaining to religion.

The affirmation, for instance, relating to the existence of God, the very corner-stone of Christian faith, is so firmly fixed in most of us that we can each sincerely declare, "I believe." We do not compromise our Christian integrity by leaving whatever slight misgivings and perplexities we have on the subject in the most trying moments of life unspoken; and yet should it be deemed worth the while in any exigency to examine ourselves carefully and to confess thoroughly, we might, and probably would, find in some corner of our reflections, if not in several corners, a crouching fear that there is, after all, no God. This fear may not, and in most cases does not, play a conspicuous part; it may not on ordinary occasions excite notice. And it may almost unconsciously enhance, in a sense, both the interest and power of our faith, as the shadow by contrast intensifies the light. If we go into the fields on a clear summer day, we may think at first that we see nothing but light spread over the ground, near and remote; but if we search for them, if we study the scene, we shall discover

shadows all about, — under the trees, rocks, hills, grasses, flowers, and fences; and that these, instead of hindering the beauty of the landscape, are a part of it, — that they are the shadings of the picture. So our faith possibly, without our realizing it, takes on finer outlines and colors by the dusky doubts that lurk in them.

But, alas! in a multitude of instances our doubts are more than small shadows hiding under floods of sunshine. They are at times as clouds darkening the skies, — yea, at times as the night to the day; and in yet more serious times and experiences, as a winter night at the poles.

It is sorrow that measures us. In prosperity we may seem full and overflowing with trust, and in adversity find ourselves empty. Our faith rises and falls, or seems to do so, as we rise and fall. This is weakness, to be sure; but human nature is weak. As God is invisible, what wonder is it if we cry out to him in almost despairing words at times; if we ask who and where he is; and if he is at all? When our life-sea is

smooth and our bark is sailing quietly, hope shines in us as does the sun in the clear heavens; but who of us makes a stormless voyage from port to port? In fair weather "we believe:" but is it strange if when the winds rise, and the skies darken, and the lightnings flash; if, when our vessel staggers and reels in the blast, and the next mountain wave threatens to bury us in the deep, — we tremble, and wear a blanched face? "We believe," but we cry out, "God save, or we perish!" We reach up in our distress for a Hand above, — and this is faith; then we look down, and agonizingly find no visible hand at the helm, — and that is doubt. "We believe," but God does not still the waves nor abate the storm. "We believe," but oh! what awful blackness above! what yawning dangers beneath! We throw out an anchor of hope, but it sinks, and sinks, and sinks in an ocean of doubt.

Even our Saviour on a certain occasion cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" These words have always seemed mysterious to me, and once in my

life painfully so. And yet at times I have gathered comfort from them. For if he who was our perfect example; if he whose faith overtopped all other faith that has ever been in the world; if he for even a moment felt that the ground was giving away under his feet, and that his Father's face was receding from him, — why may not we, in our smaller agonies, dare to show a shrinking trust, a faltering prayer?

And now I suggest another and entirely opposite question, — is there such a thing in religious matters as perfect unbelief? If no one can honestly disclaim all doubt in religion, is there one who can honestly deny that he has a fragment of belief in it? Some have so little faith in God that they seem, even to themselves, to have none whatever, as really to imagine they have none; but are they not deceived? Is it possible for one to live in a world in which the sun of religion never shines, in which no starlight penetrates the darkness of scepticism? Is there, has there ever been, a soul with no longings after God; that feels no uplifting

impulse toward him, — no touch of his down-reaching hand? Do not the most unbelieving persons, when alone with their own thoughts, when disappointment and trouble have pushed them into serious reflection, feel a stir of religious emotion somewhere in their nature? And do they not send up some kind of prayer for religious aid and comfort? There are persons, I know not how many, who, if questioned on the subject of immortality, would feel obliged to reply that they have no faith in it; but have they no faith in it? They wish it were a truth, and does hope never whisper to them that it may be a truth? The mystery of death appals them, as it does every one of us. They stumble in their reasoning about a future life, as do we all. But have not they and all of us more hope of a future existence than they and we are conscious of? We look on the face of our loved one in death, and wonder at the stillness and the mystery! We touch the hand we have so often clasped when it was warm with love, but it returns no pressure! We bend and kiss the lips we have

kissed so many times, but they are cold! We speak in the ear that was always quick to listen before, but it is deaf now! We utter the name dearer to us than all names beside, but it evokes no smile and awakens no answer! And yet there is a smile on that face, — is it the smile that life left there, or is it one the soul has sent back, as the sun after its setting assures us, by its lingering rays, that it is still shining? Mystery of mysteries! But who can stand before this mystery without a beam of hope? Is not the mystery doubled if all this means that the soul whose clay-tenement is before us has ceased to be; that the love that was in that heart, and the thought that was in that brain, have melted so suddenly into nothingness? Does our wonderful life end as the flame of a candle ends? Is this all that human ambition and human achievement mean? If mysteries are a complete bar to belief, can we believe anything? Thought itself is more inexplicable than any of its convictions. That our life should continue, is no more incredible than that it should have

begun. Every moment of living involves problems as insolvable as are found in the belief that we shall live forever.

But I am not now reasoning, nor trying to reason, on the subject of immortality. I am simply noting the questions that rise in our mind concerning it, and the answers, distinct or vague, which we get. I assume that the cases are rare, if they ever exist, in which one, if one searches for it, will not find in one's self a faint hope, at least, of a future endless life. And almost every one may exclaim, "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief!"

It may be, and doubtless is, as I have said, a weakness not to have a full faith in God, in the life, resurrection, and teachings of Christ, in immortality, in Christianity as a whole; but I want now to express my conviction that doubts concerning these doctrines are not necessarily a sin always. Men have had more doubts because they have been denied the liberty of having any.

And let us not think it incompatible with strong faith to own that we have doubts.

The saying of Tennyson is familiar that —

"There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds."

It was, I remember, a painful surprise to me, in my early ministry, to witness any shrinking of belief in those who stood to me as models of religious trust. I recall one striking instance in my congregation, of a mother, an intelligent woman, who had seemed so firmly anchored in divine trust, in the truth of immortality especially, that it never occurred to me as possible that she would exhibit any wavering under the severest circumstances. But I knew little then — less than I now know, at least — of how the clearest vision may be blinded by tears, how the strongest mind, like a reed in the storm, may wave and bend in a sweeping sorrow. The first cry of that mother as she bent over her lifeless child sounded to me like a cry of despair. And it was not altogether a wild frenzied feeling that carried her, for a moment, from the foundations of her confidence, or that seemed to do so, but something so irresistible and yet so calm,

I feared it might be lasting. I thought I must say something, as one is apt to think at such a time, though it were better generally to remain silent and let grief have its way, — it will have its way, whatever words are offered, — and said to her, "Your Christian faith assures you that your child lives and will live in a brighter, happier world, and that you will meet her again." I shall never forget her heart-rending reply. "Yes," she said, "but oh! what a mystery this is! If I could only *know* that my darling lives!" I could not understand then, as I can now, that such expressions do not, after all, signify despair always; that one who believes most may, in a sense, suffer most; that one, at least, who has the most of heart may and must in such a trial suffer most; that one whose trust in God is greatest may bow in the deepest humbleness, and feel most keenly of all the hurt of a doubt. On all such occasions it is well to remember our Saviour's cry, to which I have already referred: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

There is, let us carefully observe, an important distinction between a modest, humble, reverent unbelief, such as the text suggests, and a proud, supercilious, sneering one. There is an unbelief that prays, and an unbelief that scoffs; an unbelief that studies, investigates, seeks for light, and one that is content to be ignorant.

The fortunate thing about the man who brought his son to Christ was that he was able to lay aside whatever indifference or prejudice he may have had, and make a fair trial of the extraordinary powers he had heard so much about.

He was still more fortunate in having greater belief than unbelief. He had belief enough to take up the reins of his desire and guide himself to the healer. He had enough to inspire a prayer for help. We are not likely to receive more in this world anywhere than we pray for and try to obtain. If doubt had held the foremost place in the father's mind, he would have remained at home and his child remained unhealed.

Hence there is hope of a man always,

whatever his doubts are, if they are not prominent enough and strong enough to hold him back from his duty; if they are a feather on his shoulder, instead of a mill-stone round his neck. If the struggling swimmer has strength sufficient to keep himself on the surface of the water, he may be rescued after a time; but if he sink, he is lost. So is he religiously lost whose unbelief drags him to the bottom of life's stream. Almost every business man is, it is presumed, at the beginning of his enterprises, more or less troubled with a feeling that he may not succeed. With all his hopes, he counts the possibilities of failure. If his fears are too great, greater than his confidence, he turns back and does nothing. The successful men in the world are not those who started with no trepidation, whose feet did not hesitate at the threshold of their triumphs, but those who battled with their fears and followed their ambition.

"Our doubts are traitors,
And make us lose the good we might win
By fearing to attempt."

Keep your faith, then, in the front, and put your doubts, if you must have them, behind. No warrior ever led his army to battle — no warrior who was fit to lead men — without studying the chances of defeat. A great general is as sure to have fears as he is to keep them to himself. It has been said of General Grant, as it has of other similar men, that "he did not know what fear is." This must be a mistake. If he burned the bridges behind him in marching to battle, it was done to tell his fears that retreat would be impossible. Bonaparte was not defeated until his successes had cancelled his caution. It is an old saying that they who fear nothing know nothing. I am tempted to say that those who doubt nothing in religion believe nothing in it. If you would have no unbelief, do not try to believe. Thought strengthens faith, and it also puts a greater strain on it by multiplying its problems.

"While the calm centuries spell their lessons out,
Each truth we conquer spreads the realms of doubt."

Ignorance believes that it believes; it avoids

mysteries by shutting its eyes. While intelligence, more and more conscious of its own limits, more and more humbled by the vastness that opens before it, continually exclaims, "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief."

I have quoted Tennyson to show that doubt indicates belief often. Browning has two lines that hold a similar thought. He says, —

> "You must mix some uncertainty
> With faith, if you would have faith *be*."

And again, —

> "With me faith means perpetual unbelief
> Kept quiet, like the snake 'neath Michael's foot,
> Who stands firm just because he feels it writhe."

Browning speaks very suggestively of an "ignoble confidence;" of a "cowardly hardihood." He intimates also that we need a formidable attack of unbelief sometimes to "*shake off this torpor of assurance from our creed.*" That is, I suppose he means, an "assurance" that ceases to be one the moment it is awakened, and which it is better that doubt should awaken, that an active, stirring confidence may take its place.

Finally, let us not expect too much of our belief. It is inconsistent to demand of it the service of knowledge. Let us not insist, more than elsewhere, on having everything in religion explained. Belief in God ought not to signify a perfect comprehension of God. What object, what subject, with which we have to deal, is transparent. Mysteries are plentier than the grasses in the fields or the leaves in the forest. You ask what we know of God. Very little, — hardly less, however, than we know of Nature. How does God exist. We do not know. God is a spirit. And what is a spirit? We do not know. Has God a body or form? Has he personality? We believe he has, but do not know. Well, if we *know* so nearly nothing about God, how does it happen that we believe so much of him? We believe so much of him because we know so little. Faith is unnecessary where we can see and demonstrate. Faith is better than eyes, better than knowledge. With faith we see round the world, and farther than any telescope among other worlds. By faith Columbus discovered Ame-

rica before he sailed. What is matter? We do not know. What are heat and light, attraction and electricity? We do not know. But we believe in them and trust them. We stand amazed and humbled before the incomprehensible greatness of the Almighty, yet we "believe, — Lord, help our unbelief."

Belief in a future world does not by any means imply a power to penetrate its wonders, to map off its lands, and to describe its inhabitants. What do we know, then, of a future life? Nothing, perhaps. We cannot lift the curtain that drops down between us and to-morrow even. We go with our loved ones to the narrow, unlighted portal of Eternity, and there our feet, our eyes, and our knowledge, that would advance, and plead to go on, are stopped! But our faith, arm in arm with the departed one, enters the strange gate, walks down the valley until it catches a glimpse of the shining shore, and hills and cities of the land beyond. This is what faith is for, — to break through the darkness and mysteries that bar out other powers, and light the way where neither sun nor star shines.

Who has so much unbelief that he cannot come to the Saviour? Why should any inexplicable doctrine or contradictory philosophy hold one back? Is any only troubled in trying to understand all that is said or written concerning the history and office of Christ? Does any one stumble at the fact that Christendom is divided into sects; that its theories multiply as its thinkers increase? But thinkers and theories nearly all meet on common ground when the character of Christ is discussed. Have you faith in the life and goodness of the Son of God? It is hardly possible for any of us to doubt the beauty and perfectness of Christ's example: can we more rationally doubt that it is our duty to follow his example? Go to him, then, I beseech you. Test his power to heal your sins and your sorrows. If you have any unbelief, as you are almost sure to have, carry that with you and lay it before him. He will not condemn you for doubts you cannot avoid. He understands your religious struggles and difficulties, and it is better that you confess them to him. Go to him as to your best

friend, for such he is. Go to him even if you must leave your creed and all creeds behind; go and tell him sincerely and reverently the whole truth. "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief!"

"Eternal truth! beyond our hopes and fears
Sweep the vast orbits of thy myriad spheres!
From age to age, while History carves sublime
On her waste rock the flaming curves of time,
How the wild swayings of our planet show
That worlds unseen surround the world we know!"

X.

THE NINETY AND NINE.

What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance. — LUKE XV. 4–7.

NO one of our Saviour's parables is perhaps more important or more interesting than this. It is both; and equally doctrinal and practical. It affirms much and suggests more. It is simple enough on its surface for children, and has wells deep enough for thinkers. The road along which it leads us has been trodden to smoothness by an army of theologians, and I do not profess to have

found any new turns in it; hence I can only do as the latest travellers elsewhere do, — see and describe once more, in my own way, what others have seen and described in their way.

The shepherd's occupation is an ancient one. It is said that the characters in the Chinese language signifying "righteousness," "justice," "honesty," mean also "my sheep," "one's own sheep." This philological index is supposed to point to the extreme antiquity of sheep-keeping. As agriculture in this and other Eastern countries increased, and pasture-lands diminished, as the wandering habits of the people changed more and more into fixed settlements, the shepherd's vocation lost some of its charm; but it has never ceased to recall the most delightful pictures of rural experiences, and to supply the happiest symbols of poetic and religious sentiment. If any literature transcends the beauty of Greek and Roman pastorals, it must be the Hebrew, — if at least these words of the Psalmist are to be taken as a sample: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me

to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."

The shepherd's life, in warm climates particularly, was an out-door life; it brought him into close and pleasant intimacy with Nature, — Nature in her fairest aspects, with the hills, valleys, streams, and skies. While the green fields were a pasture for the sheep, the stars were a pasture for the shepherd. It was a quiet, meditative life, — or might have been so, — and favorable, therefore, to religious thoughts and feelings.

Of all animals sheep are perhaps the most docile and attractive; the most innocent apparently; and most human too. They seem to be most frequently referred to in the Scriptures to illustrate human qualities and conditions. "I have gone astray like lost sheep," says the Psalmist. The Saviour spoke of the Jews as "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Referring to his own flock, Jesus said, "I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep." He himself is called a Lamb, — "A Lamb without blemish and with-

out spot." "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."

I do not desire to strain any point or principle in the text, to read into it any meaning which is not read from it; but there is something hopefully significant to me in the fact that mankind is compared in Christ's teachings to no rougher, wilder animals than sheep; that Christ is willing to stand in our minds and in his relation to us, as a shepherd to his sheep; and that this relation is allowed to be the same whether his sheep be in the fold or out of it. Is there not immense encouragement in this fact? Is it not, and designed to be, a compliment to human nature? I should lay yet more stress on this circumstance, did I not remember that Christ on one or two occasions compared certain kinds of people — Pharisees and Sadducees — to vipers. "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" This seems like an exception to the Saviour's general manner. But he speaks here, not of men in the mass, but of those two classes whose conduct had been especially

vile, and deserving of unusually severe condemnation. I do not think Christ applied this term to mankind as a whole, or that he would justify us in so understanding and using it. I still insist, notwithstanding, that it is a most hopeful indication of Christ's knowledge and view of human nature that he passes over such animals as bears and wolves and tigers, and associates us with such gentle creatures as sheep. If our ancestors were animals at all, I could wish they were no lower or more offensive than sheep. And if the doctrine of metempsychosis shall prove true, I shall be glad to find that my next existence has assumed no worse form than one of the meek and tranquil objects for which the Good Shepherd cares.

Some importance should doubtless be attached to the fact that this parable does not concede, nor even intimate in word or spirit, that the sheep which is lost is in any other sense severed from the flock. It is still a part of the flock; is still counted with the flock. They are ninety and nine, and this completes the number one hundred. The

shepherd yet owns it and claims it as his. So the parable teaches, by implication, at least, that a lost soul is not cut off from the human family, nor from the love of God, nor from the ownership of Christ. Those who are saved are as much blessed as they can be, or should ask to be, in their salvation. The fold which shelters them, and into which they have been lovingly gathered, is itself the best witness of the care they have had and still have. But the lost receive because they need especial care.

The religion of the Pharisees differed from Christ's greatly and in many ways. Theirs was narrow and local; his was broad and universal. They looked and waited for a leader who would take his place and stand well with the supposed higher classes, the respectable classes, the ninety and nine; and hence he disappointed and enraged them by mingling more with the poor and despised portions of the community. It was to answer their selfish objections to this course that he uttered the parable. "The Pharisees and scribes," says the account, "murmured, saying, This man

receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." He replied that saving sinners was his particular mission; that he had come to seek and to save the lost especially. They said, "Let the lost be lost, for they deserve no better lot than the one they have chosen;" he said, "No, I must go and find the lost." They said, "It is enough if the ninety and nine are saved;" he said, "No, it is not enough till all, the whole hundred, are saved."

Judged by this wonderful parable, then, Christianity is an aggressive religion, an out-reaching religion, an out-searching religion. It is boundlessly comprehensive. Its aims are as wide as the earth. Christianity sends us out of ourselves, out of our homes, out of our churches, out of our parties, out of our nationalities even, on missions of reform; it sends us out of everywhere into everywhere where good is to be done, — where the ignorant are to be taught, the hungry fed, the naked clothed, the sorrowful comforted, and transgressors converted. The New Testament does not spend its breath so much on the saved as on the unsaved, not so much

to make feasts for the rich as for the poor. It does not teach us to sing hallelujahs over saints in their rocking-chairs so much as over the victories which sinners win through repentance.

The church is a fold, to be sure, and should give good shelter to all who are in it, — but it should also invite all not in it to come; should go out and persuade them to come; show them the way and help them to come; make plenty of comfortable room for all who do come. The church which lacks missionaries lacks zeal, lacks consistency, lacks power. The ninety and nine who are content with ninety and nine, who can sing and pray as well without the one more, are themselves wanting, it is feared, in at least one of the one hundred parts of salvation.

What is wealth? It is a fold, — but not for those alone who have wealth. It is not to gratify its possessors merely. It is an outreaching and down-reaching helpfulness to persons less favored. No man is rich who does not share his treasures and his comforts with the poor. What is society? It is a

fold, and yet not a fold for protecting the best people only. It exists, or should exist, for all who need its advantages, all who can be brought into it from the unorganized masses.

What are educational institutions of all kinds, schools and colleges? These are folds, but not so much for covering pupils and scholars already made as for others who wish to become pupils and scholars. The cardinal virtue in our common school is that it enrolls as its beneficiaries all the children it can find, rich or poor; that it goes out after the ignorant and leads them in; that it seeks the education of all.

Any helpful power, any excellence, any superiority of gift which any person or body of persons possesses, lays on such person or body a corresponding obligation to extend it; to distribute it as far as possible. The young man who, more blessed in this respect than other young men around him, has been to college and has returned with his diploma, is but poorly educated, and shows but little gratitude for his superior opportunities, if he does

not humbly strive to make himself henceforth a light in the dark places of society.

I have often wondered in studying this parable whether the numbers "ninety and nine" and "one" have, separate or together, any special significance; whether "five and seventy" and "twenty-five" would answer as well? The disproportion between "ninety and nine" and "one" is strikingly great. Could it have been made less so without marring the purpose of the parable? Can we suppose the lesson would have been essentially the same if the numbers had been reversed, — that is, if "one of them" had represented the contents of the fold, and "ninety and nine" the missing ones of the flock? "What man of you having an hundred sheep, and if he lose ninety and nine of them, doth not leave the one of them in the wilderness, and go after them which are lost, until he find them?" Would this read as well?

Of course the Saviour did not recognize the superior righteousness claimed by the Pharisees, and hence he made the fold and the number in it a supposition simply. The

whole was a parable, and hence an exactly literal interpretation was not designed. "Let it be granted," was Christ's reasoning, "that you Pharisees are as pure and just and righteous as you assume to be, and that other people are as impure and unjust and unrighteous as you affirm them to be, — what ought I to do in that case even? What should I do if only the same motive ruled me that rules the shepherd regarding his sheep? The shepherd turns from the sheep already housed in the wilderness and searches for the one that has gone astray. So I turn from you who think yourselves holy, and who, if you are holy, have no great need of me, to those who, you confess, are unsaved, and who cannot find their way to salvation without me." All this is plain. But the question still is, — a question which seems to me worth considering, at least, — why, in his supposition, did our Saviour make the number in the fold so large, and the number out of it so small? Did it happen so, or was there a deep design in it? I do not wish to have the point pressed, unless it presses itself. "A parable," some one has said, "sel-

dom goes on all fours." I would not try to use wiser lips than my own to utter words of my own.

Is it not rational to accept the sum of the numbers "ninety and nine" and "one" as representing the whole human race? Or let it be entirely our own supposition that *all mankind is one hundred.* Now of the one hundred, which includes all mankind, what proportion dare we, in our humble belief, count as among the finally saved, and what proportion as among the finally lost? The popular belief a century or two centuries ago reckoned the saved as "one" and the lost as "ninety and nine." But there has been a wonderful change and a wonderful advance along this line of religious thought. It is only in recent years, however, comparatively, that the quantity of the finally lost has been reduced, by a larger hope, to a minority. The salvation of infants, once doubted by many, has at last passed beyond all doubt in anybody's mind. That the ignorant pagans have been, or shall be, excluded from heaven, is seriously questioned by multitudes, and ac-

cepted by few in any Christian sect. The additions which an increasing hope has built on to heaven in these later times has more than doubled the size of this terrestrial structure as it appeared drawn on the theological canvas of the Middle Ages. A large majority in any intelligent Christian community in America or in Europe, we are bold enough to assume, entertain a faith to-day which rejoicingly makes room enough in its heaven for a large majority of mankind.

Does the parable we are considering throw any light on this matter?

The word "lost," as the Saviour and the New Testament use it, does not seem to refer, let us observe, to the soul's final destiny at all, — that is, not in the old Orthodox sense, but to the actual present condition of souls living in positive sin. The world was "lost," and Jesus came to find it and save it, — not from punishment, but from sin; not from evils in the other world particularly, but, as Paul distinctly says, "that he might deliver us from *this present evil world*." [1] The world

[1] Galatians, i. 4.

is still lost, and Jesus is still finding and saving it. The mighty forces of Christianity, and whatever other moral forces God employs, are at work saving souls. One soul after another is found by the searching Christ, or the searching spirit of God, by this good influence or by that, and led into better ways of living.

What proportion, then, are lost in *this* scriptural sense of lost? Without pretending to do so impossible a thing as to offer exact figures here, I confess myself as so optimistic as to believe that it is the very few in comparison who are to be set down as desperately wicked. It is the few certainly who are to be classed as criminals. It is the few even who are so bad as to cause their separation from ordinary society. I do not believe that more than one person in one hundred persons should, in the fullest, sorriest sense of the word, be spoken of as "lost." In a certain sense of the word, in the sense of not being perfect, nor anywhere near perfect, in the sense of being conscious that we are sinners, and that we need more salvation than we have yet attained, that we have many

things still to repent of and ask God's pardon for, — in this sense all of us, the best of us, are "lost."

The shepherd's whole flock is out of the fold until it reaches the fold. Until it has reached the fold it is simply moving toward it. The shepherd walks in front and leads and calls his flock; he leads all and takes especial care of some. He carries the lambs in his bosom. So Christ, the good shepherd, walks before and leads and calls us. We are all weak, but some stumble and stray away more than others. But for his guidance none of us would reach the fold. And during our march we are all lost, in the sense that we are yet out of the fold. But that we have the fold in view, and our feet and our face turned in that direction, is the important fact in the case.

And herein lies the wide difference between what we call good people and bad people. Good people are not wholly good, but they are faced toward the right; bad people are not wholly bad, but they are faced toward the wrong, and are straying more and more from

virtue. No person is without sin; but a majority, a large majority I trust, of persons desire goodness and strive to attain it. They have noble ideals and try to follow them, though they fail in some measure. There are a few, however, in most communities, if not in all, who are so given over to wrong-doing that they are not even faced, as I have said, the right way. They fall far below the average of human endeavor and stand alone in their wickedness. I do not know what the proportion is between those who desire, and pray and strive to live a better life, and those who have lapsed so far into depravity as to seem to have no fear of God or sense of right. I feel sure, however, that no society, no organization of people, large or small, can exist very long in which there is not a mighty preponderance of goodness. We have an insane asylum in every State, but the sane people in every State would fill thousands of such buildings. Our heart sickens at the sight of a drunkard staggering in our streets; but the poor miserable man is but one contrasted with the multitudes of persons whom the cup

has not mastered. The sun of our life's sky seems eclipsed when we visit a prison and mark the sullen, downcast countenances of the hundreds of criminals confined there; but when we come out again into the great wide world and realize how immensely those victims to evil passions we left behind are outnumbered by orderly virtuous people, we take heart once more. And the Lord said, "If I find fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes; I will not destroy it for ten's sake." The righteousness of ten persons weighs more than the wickedness of thousands, and it may help to reform and save thousands of wicked people. If there be a little righteousness in it, the city may be spared; if there be too little, as in the case of Sodom, the city grows worse and perishes. "The kingdom of heaven," said the Saviour, "is like unto leaven hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." A little good can leaven a whole kingdom; but evil has its limits. It must in time cease to be evil, and add more to the good, or cease to be altogether. The world at

large is not a Sodom. In the world at large the evil is but "one," while the good is ninety and nine.

One other point in the parable should be carefully noticed. "And go after that which is lost *until he find it*." How sadly incomplete would have been the parable without this last clause, *until he find it*. It is not enough for the shepherd to know that one of the flock is missing; it is not enough to send his thoughts back after it; it is not enough even to go and search for it. It is far more important that he find the lost sheep. And finding it means bringing it to the fold.

We suggest, therefore, that the parable teaches, by inference, at least, the ultimate salvation of all mankind. When the "one" is added to the "ninety and nine," we have the whole number which, we assume, is the whole human race.

"And when he hath found it, he layeth it upon his shoulders *rejoicing*." The happiest moment to the shepherd is naturally when he has found his lost sheep. And his happiness flowers suddenly into increased tender-

ness. Gladness is often the seed of sweetness. We extract happiness from the things we love, and love the things that make us happy. Jesus refers to the shepherd's joy to express his own in saving us. The bliss which follows repentance is not all ours; for he who accepts our repentance with a promise of pardon, rejoices also, and far more than we, doubtless. To save is greater than to be saved. It is better to do good than to receive good. Is it safe to suggest that our Saviour, as in the shepherd's case, is more tender to the lost because they have been lost; that for this reason there is more pity in his shoulder to which he so carefully lifts them when found? "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," — what does this mean? What does this also mean: "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord"? It means this at least: that grace is mightier and more lasting than sin; that it is the work and joy of grace to overcome sin and rescue the sinner.

But these last words of the parable must not be interpreted to signify that as the lost sheep is taken up and carried to the fold, so lost souls are saved without any choice or exertion of their own. Jesus uses no arbitrary force in saving us. He does not interfere with our freedom. We are not borne literally on his shoulders to heaven. When Christ found Paul, he said to him, "Rise, stand upon thy feet." We must stand upon our feet. The language referred to in the parable took this form to express the love and tenderness and exceeding helpfulness of the Saviour toward the lost. His shoulders are strong and willing enough to bear us to heaven; but it is better for us that he show the way and that we walk in it; that he lead and we follow.

But if we refuse to rise, to stand on our feet, or to walk to the fold! The parable does not concede our refusal. It does not hint the possibility of the shepherd's return to the fold without the lost sheep he went to find and did find. The crowning grandeur of the parable appears in the assurance it gives

of Christ's, the Good Shepherd's, complete success. The splendid edifice of argument which it builds lacks its towering arch and keystone without that promise.

"And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

Here the parable closes. And how beautifully it closes! We have found flowers all the way, and they blossom as plentifully at the end.

If heaven — almost the last word in the parable — signifies the assembly of righteous souls in the other world, and if these departed souls rejoice over the conversion of sinners here, it seems to follow that they have the power of looking back into this world, or that they have some other means of knowing what is done on earth. And if they know and rejoice when one repents, must they not

know and mourn more or less when one sins? How can they be happy with so much sin in sight? Many perplexing questions rise here. We cannot hope to have them all answered. Nor is it well, perhaps, to speculate very much upon them. Let us trust where we cannot see. We have generally supposed that heaven's happiness is complete, that its cups have not the slightest bitterness in them. But it may not be wholly so. The human family is perhaps so closely related and bound together that one half of it cannot be completely happy as long as the other half is unhappy; that the ninety and nine saved must suffer anxiety about the one unsaved. Loved ones who have gone may be waiting with deferred hope for loved ones to follow. We miss them, and can we, dare we, doubt that they miss us? I do not by any means imagine that heaven is a place of sorrow and misery; but I can conceive it possible and probable, indeed I do not see how it can be otherwise, that angels and saints and Christ himself are pained to some extent when they look down and witness the sins and sufferings

of this world. That they are not more distressed and inconsolably so, can be explained only by the supposition that they, as we do not, see the end; that they realize, as we cannot, fully and joyfully that sin is not, and righteousness is, immortal; that the human family shall not be always divided; that the lost shall finally be added to the saved.

"Give evil but an end, — and all is clear!
Make it eternal, all things are obscured!
Oh, much doth life the sweet solution want
Of all made blessed in far futurity!
Heaven needs it too."

XI.

THE THIRD HEAVEN.

I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell, — God knoweth, — such an one caught up into the third heaven. — 2 Cor. xii. 2.

THE ancients, some of them, divided the skies and the regions above them into various apartments or spheres, each higher or lower than the others, and to which, according to grades of character, departed spirits were assigned. The Mahometans count seven of these blessed abodes. The Jews sometimes speak of this number and sometimes of three only, as does Saint Paul in the text. One who is supremely happy is even now spoken of as being in the "seventh heaven."

Paul knew a man — and this man was doubtless himself — who, while living, was "caught up into the third heaven." He

did not know — and if he did not, we cannot, of course — whether during this strange experience he was in the body or out of it; that is, whether his body was raised with him or left behind. He remembered only the remarkable fact of his ascension, in some way and in some sense, to an exceptionally and transcendently happy place or state.

He appears to have had another similar experience; or else he merely repeats his description of the first, which is not improbable, in slightly altered language. In his second account the "third heaven" is substituted by "paradise." Perhaps the two, "third heaven" and "paradise," were the same; and what one or the other really was we have no means of ascertaining.

The Apostle is so strangely economical in his information that he stops with saying that he heard in that place or condition, whichever it might have been, "unspeakable words not lawful for any man to utter;" that is, I suppose, he means words not only impossible to human lips, but too sacred also for him to attempt to repeat.

The Bible gives little heed to man's curiosity, as it was evidently not written for so trifling a purpose. It turns off the light often at just the moment when we are most anxious to see, — shuts the door of its revelations as soon as our hurrying feet have touched their threshold. We should like to know — though there may be no real advantage in knowing — what the "third heaven" or "paradise," one or the other or both, signified: whether Paul, as some Christians believe and some doubt, was literally lifted off the earth, or was thrown into some kind of a spiritual trance, — into a state of mind which induced the feeling merely of soaring far aloft into the heavens. Not that we suppose that so scholarly and well-trained a man as Paul was much given to fancies; that so honest a man deceived himself or wished to deceive others. It is conceivable, if not probable, that he designed his brief description to be accepted in a figurative rather than literal sense; as a natural experience and yet one divinely augmented and inspired, — an experience which might have

occurred in the body, while it was still so elevated mentally and spiritually, so preternaturally excited, as to become oblivious to its surroundings. What more it was than this it is in vain if not unnecessary to inquire. Theorizing over a scene in which the single actor was himself so cautious and silent promises but little profit. We walk on very holy and very uncertain ground here.

What precise relation this world holds to the world above; how and where the two unite, or each lapses over into the other, if indeed they are so very near together as we love to think they are; whether the river which divides them, and which we are so soon to cross, be so narrow that eyes may see and ears may hear from shore to shore; whether there be any intermediate trysting-spot where souls in and out of the body may come and hold mutual converse, — are matters on which many sincere people are not agreed, and all people are more or less perplexed. If the dear ones who have left us can come back to us, and think it wise to come, the greatest mystery of all is that they do not; or if they

do come, as many honest persons aver, it is still strange that their visits are so infrequent and uncertain. Perhaps a majority of us are unworthy of their presence, or perhaps our eyes are too earthly to see unearthly forms, and our ears too dull to hear voices so low and soft.

I shall purposely avoid expressing any distinct theory of my own on this subject, because I have none. The charity in which I hope to speak is not more needed by others than by myself.

It is quite impossible, I may say, however, for most of us to accept unchallenged the mass of theories and experiences of persons who claim to have stood by an open door through which messages are brought from the other side, through which also faces of departed friends are seen peering out; and it is difficult if not impossible for a few of us to reject them all as delusions. It would have been better if many who have believed or imagined themselves "caught up" into such high privileges and to have heard such extraordinary revelations, had they imitated Paul's

modesty and prudence and not attempted to utter what should have been unutterable anywhere, — what certainly was neither profitable news nor interesting literature. But the true and the false, the wise and the foolish, are everywhere sadly mixed in this world. Notwithstanding the mistakes and forgeries and repelling follies with which the problem has been loaded, it seems much more than probable — well-proved, indeed — that souls in the body have been permitted in some instances, if not in very many, to meet and commune with souls out of the body, in our times and in all times since time began. Some of the noblest and most intelligent and purest men and women in all ages, in the most recent as well as the most ancient, have solemnly averred that they shared on certain occasions the company and councils of angelic beings; that without losing their hold of the earth, they ascended to some middle heavens where they received instructions and assurances from powers altogether above this world. Milton may not be supposed to have had more knowledge in this direction than we

all have, — though great poets must have great insight, — but did he not publish a plausible theory, and one from which we may, if we can believe it, derive much strength and comfort when he wrote, —

"Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep"?

If spirits are moving about among us night and day, it would be stranger if we never felt one touch of them nor had one faint whisper from them than if they kept themselves entirely concealed.

Mrs. Stowe writes of the other world: —

"Sweet hearts around us throb and beat;
Sweet helping hands are stirred;
And palpitates the veil between
With breathings almost heard."

Is this poetry only, or is it truth? Browning says, —

"Fancy with fact is just one fact the more."

Have not Mrs. Stowe's lines a "fact" with "one fact the more"? That is, have they not a beautiful truth beautifully expressed?

What is more comforting than the conviction, or the half-conviction, that the veil hanging between us and our departed friends stirs at times before their breath; that their hearts and ours are beating almost side by side?

And yet though the partition between us is but a veil, it is better that we cannot lift it when we wish, nor tear it down. While our eyes are needed to keep almost constant watch of duties on this side, it would do manifest harm to have them captured too often by things on that side.

It is doubtful if it would be beneficial to have all dread of death removed. The mystery that enshrouds it, in spite of the most cheerful faith, prevents our easy trifling with it. I have noticed that the profoundest minds are likely to be the most profoundly impressed by death, the most deeply awed by it. A strong Christian faith does indeed overcome the fear of death, or rather of what lies beyond it. Much of our trembling hesitation to meet death comes from our love of life; and this love is necessary in stimulating us to exert every effort in preserving life. In

the rebound from the old superstitions regarding death, there may be danger of our being forced too far, by flippant theories concerning it, in the other direction, so far as to lose that sense of sacredness we should always feel in its presence. Christianity has painted no monsters on the walls of the tomb to add to our natural dread of it. It has placed, through our faith, angels in the grave to announce to us the truth of the resurrection; and we may be sure that it is a blessing to die as well as to live; a blessing to put off this mortal body and to put on a spiritual one.

> "So when my latest breath
> Shall rend the veil in twain,
> By death I shall escape from death,
> And life eternal gain."

Let us notice the sublime gravity and dignity with which Paul refers to his visit in the antechamber of heaven. He exhibits no cant, no pious shallowness, no frivolous familiarity with such sacred things, no disposition to flood the ears of his less-favored brethren with extravaganzas. He tells, instead of more, less than he saw.

Let us observe also that Paul brought no frightful accounts or pictures back to the earth with him. His impressions have a sober color perhaps, but they are not in the least discouraging. He appears to have been wonderfully elated, exalted, thrilled, magnified in thought and feeling, but to have so fully realized at the same time the profundity of the whole scene, to have been so fearful that his joy might hide his solemnity and make him seem boastful and trivial, that he suppressed himself to some extent; to how great an extent we cannot say. He might, but for the reason hinted at, have revealed a great deal more. This is the way he writes in connection with the text: —

"It is not expedient for me doubtless to *glory*, but I will come" (nevertheless) "to visions and revelations of the Lord" (which I have experienced in my life). . . . "For should I desire to glory, I shall not be foolish" (that is, not really foolish, though I may seem so to some), "for I shall speak the" (exact) "truth; but I forbear" (and do not speak the whole truth) "*lest any should*

account of me above that which he seeth me to be, or heareth of me. And by reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations, wherefore, that I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given me a thorn in the flesh."

What this "thorn in the flesh" was we cannot perhaps conjecture. To us it does not appear necessary that he should have had a greater guard against "*overmuch* exaltation" than his modesty and good sense.

But leaving this very superficial discussion of the problem referred to, or the particular phase of it which the text naturally suggested first of all, we will now turn to a more practical point, — the one I intended to dwell on chiefly, and which I have perhaps been too long in reaching.

Let us suppose either that Paul was raised, in or out of the body, to some beatific place above the earth, or that he was only inwardly transported by some divine means, some unusual vision or thought, to an extreme height of glory and happiness. In one case or the other, he was carried in the direction, at least, in which we all naturally

wish to be carried; that is, above the ordinary level of life. No matter whether he rose as far as the upper skies, and on angels' wings, or no farther than his own superior meditations and feelings, helped by divine influences, could lift him. In either instance he was "caught up." To be "caught up" by some means gradually all the time, or suddenly at times out of a too worldly world; to have some kind of contact or communication with powers above us, — should be an experience of us all.

Saint Paul, in referring to the two worlds, and to the change expected in passing up from one to the other, says: "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." We shall, then, at some time, be "caught up" completely out of this world and out of this body; but not now. And yet we are living but poorly, if we are not every day growing less earthy and more heavenly, — more away from the ground and toward the skies. For some reason not necessary for us to ascertain now, the word "up" is naturally used in con-

nection with the growth and destiny of man. Even in our minds heaven is associated with the skies. The good man walks in an upward and the bad man in a downward path. Education signifies to draw out, and to draw up probably as well. It is an uplifting process.

The evolution theory asserts that the human race began as low as the animal, if not in the animal, — as low as any lump of clay; that the rocks and trees and flowers were our brothers and sisters. Beginning like the plant, we have got so far from the earth as to be called men and women. If we ever were so near the ground as to crawl over it, like the serpent, or as to walk on all fours, like the animal, we have finally risen to an erect position; and our head, as it ought to be, is the highest part of our body and points in the direction of our destiny, — that is, upward. But what are we now but beings who have their roots in the earth, who live on the fruits of the earth, walk about on the earth, and finally have their grave in the earth? We have powers, however, which seem to have had a higher origin, and to seek a nobler

goal. The body shall become dust, as it was; but the spirit, which has been rising more and more away from the clod, will continue to ascend. The lower grades of animals have their homes in the ground, the higher grades on and above the ground.

Sin is represented as a serpent crawling in the dust; the Holy Spirit as a dove flying condescendingly from the heavens. The eagle is the noblest emblem of Liberty, because it has the strongest wings and soars the highest. One stands "high" and another "low" in our estimation. We like to climb the tallest mountains. If we shall ever learn to navigate the air, that will be in two senses the highest mode of travelling. It is not strange that men in old times and in new times have built towers. In these various ways and signs the human soul has asserted its upward tendencies, — its kinship, not with the ground, but with the skies. Our church-spires point where our lives aim and our faith ends; so the work of civilization, of society, of education, and of religion is to lift us as far from the earth as is possible.

But although we are finally to be raised out of these mortal conditions into other and wholly spiritual ones, we must not forget that we are first to pass through this world and its duties. We should not wish to be caught up to the skies until our work is done on earth. We may be looking up when we should be looking down. Some one has said, "Life may be over-spiritual as well as over-worldly." I have been greatly interested in certain lofty sentiments expressed on this subject in Browning's poetry, and particularly with the practical way in which he balances our future ideals with the present and actual; with which he delays us and entertains us in the vestibule of our experiences — which is this life — before he leads across the threshold of the life to come. Bestowing the highest possible compliment on the soul by calling it "infinity," — and so it is in a certain noble sense, for its development is to be unlimited and endless, and seems even now greater than all the world which envelops and hinders it, — he says, —

" Let the employer match the thing employed,
Fit to the finite his infinity."

What work is larger than fitting ourselves to this present life while it lasts? It may seem inexplicable that mind has been so married to the dust; that the greater has been so inconveniently crowded into the lesser; that the eagle which can and will by and by soar to the sun must for a while sit quietly and sleepily in his cage and wink at the meanest objects on the ground. And yet to learn to fly to such a height, the eagle must be born in his nest below. What if it shall prove that heaven, when we have reached it, is worth no more than the earth was when we had it; that the earth at least was the ladder without which we could not have climbed to heaven? Browning says, —

" As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry, 'All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more now than flesh helps soul.' "

And was not this thought borrowed from Paul? " For all things are yours, — or the

world, or life, or death, or things present or things to come, — *all are yours.*" All these things are ours now, and out of them we are to extract all possible good. There is no sin in loving this life. There is sin in hating it, in shirking it, in hastening out of it before it has made us all it could have made us.

But it is possible to live in the world and yet grow away from it; and this is right living. We may become heavenly by living worthily in the flesh.

> "To bear is to conquer our fate."

If our duty lies at our feet, we see more there to attract and improve us at the time than by gazing into the heavens. Says Browning again, —

> "Do I stoop? I pluck a posy.
> Do I stand and stare? All is blue."

Condescension is often ascension. Christ rose nearer to God by coming down so near to man. We are lifted by lifting our fellow-men, — lifted

> "With that stoop of the soul which in bending upraises it too."

"When I am weak," said Paul, "then am I strong." "He that humbleth himself," said Christ, "shall be exalted." Jesus "humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even unto the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name." And so it is only in bowing meekly to God's will in our lowliest duties that we may hope for his happiest favors, or, to quote yet another line from Browning's "Saul," —

> "As by each new obeisance in spirit I climb to his feet."

But having warned ourselves against an "over-spiritual" life, — a life that consists in star-gazing altogether, and stumbling over things right before us, — let us avoid the other extreme also, of living so much in this world as to forget the one above us. Christ says,[1] "Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on." That is, be not "over-anxious," he doubtless means. We

[1] In the New Version, which I oftener quote.

ought to and must give some heed to the demands of the body. We ought to and must provide food and drink and clothing for the body; but there are higher demands also. "Thou shalt not live on bread *alone*," said Christ; but he did not say we can dispense with bread. "Is not the life more than food and the body than the raiment?" There is a sense in which the body should be forgotten, in which we should hardly know most of the time whether we are in it or out of it. He who is thinking almost constantly of the table, to whom food is the most essential thing, is ruled by his appetite, and is an animal altogether. He who is thinking always of how he is dressed, if not another animal, is superficial and silly. Such an individual needs to be intellectually elevated. He who takes the best care of his mind cares best generally for his body. Physicians are pretty well agreed that healthy thoughts are medicine to the flesh; that fear of sickness is an invitation for it to visit us; that imagining ourselves diseased is apt so make us really so.

Our body is a heavy weight on the intel-

lect, and at times a hindering one; but when the mind rises it lifts the body. Thought etherealizes the flesh. The best blood is that which flows around the best mind; but there is a sense in which mind can dwell apart and above the body. Byron writes of —

"The dome of mind, the palace of the soul."

What palace is grander than this? What dome is higher? Carlyle had his study in the top-loft of his house so as not to be disturbed by the noises below. One may mount the stairway of thought and go and sit in the dome of the soul, leaving the ground-floor of flesh for a while. One is often carried up and out of himself by an interesting book; for an hour he forgets all but the pages before him. When he lays down the book, he himself comes down out of another world into this again. What a descent the poet makes when he leaves his verses for his daily meals! Carlyle was obliged to come down from his top-loft for his roast beef; from his after-dinner coffee he ascended and continued his intellectual feast.

One of the good things most sure to raise us out of ourselves, out of our discontent and selfishness, out of our troubles and murmurings also, out of the thought of our body and its pains, is useful, absorbing work. The lead which strikes the soldier engaged in battle is not felt; not until he has time to look for his wound does he realize that he has one. The missiles aimed at us in the thickest of life's warfare cause but little pain until we stop our business to see what has happened to us. "He is so interested in what he is doing," we often say of one, "that he does not know *what* he is doing." He is so absorbed in his invention, or in his scheme of charity, or in his railroad building, or his scientific studies, or in preaching the gospel, or in feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, and clothing the naked, that "he cannot tell whether he is in the body or out of it." Work is happiness, and partly because it drives out of our mind the things which make us unhappy. Superior thoughts banish inferior ones. If our time is so poorly employed that we wish to kill any part of it, we cannot do this by idle-

ness; idleness is more likely to kill us, our happiness at least.

The man whom Paul knew as having been "caught up into the third heaven" was, he said, "a man in Christ;" that is, a Christian. There is no uplifting, exalting influence equal to religion. The soul that would make its highest flights toward heaven must be "girt" with spiritual wings. What vision is like the vision of one born into a new love of God, into a new Christian life! What peace is like that which fills the heart of one who has come to know the full meaning of worship, prayer, and praise; which fills the heart of one who, resting repentantly on the bosom of his Saviour, is unmistakably conscious of God's eternal forgiveness!

But such bliss is not perpetual; so much of life, alas! is so prosaic and hard. The rosy morning of conversion is followed by a long day of commonplace.

Our life-ascent in all things is for the most part slow and gradual.

"The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight."

Our real permanent life grows as the strong tree grows. Occasionally, however, we rise more rapidly; but in all such cases we descend immediately. Longfellow is careful to say that the "heights" by great men "reached and *kept* were not attained by sudden flight." We do not know how long Paul remained in the "third heaven;" but he returned to this "working-day world" again. Jesus took Peter and James and John "up into a high mountain, and was transfigured before them;" he showed them the faces of Moses and Elias also. The disciples, enraptured at the opportunity and the sight, exclaimed, "Master, it is good for us to be here!" But they could not stay there. They must return to the world at once. It was, however, something to have touched their feet to that hallowed spot, and to have had a glimpse of the glories which had been momentarily unveiled there. The transfiguration itself passed; but its holy influence remained. Most of us have at some time in our lives been taken upon some such mount, where we seemed to breathe a more heavenly atmos-

phere, and where the things we saw and heard made us reluctant to return and resume our ordinary tasks; and yet the remembrance of our exalted experience helped ever afterward to glorify and lighten these tasks. Though such experiences are short and far apart, we never go down from the high mount where we have been into quite so low a valley as before. The hours spent with congenial friends; delightful moments with uplifting books; June days in company with Nature; walks in green fields and in the shades of leafy woods; outlooks from hillsides upon ravishing landscapes; spring mornings and summer evenings; hours and moments when we inwardly cried, —

> "Oh, stay! Oh, stay!
> Joy so seldom weaves a chain
> Like this,"—

what sanctifying spells hours and moments like these have left in our minds! They are gone, and yet not gone!

> "The music in my heart I bore,
> Long after it was heard no more."

It had been "fourteen years" since Paul's visit to the "third heaven," but it was still fresh in his mind, and it was still helping to turn his earth into heaven. It was perhaps the remembrance of this that helped him to say, "I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better; yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sakes."

The shepherds at Bethlehem may have had in all their lives but one such night as that on which the Saviour was born. They had watched their sheep for months and years, and they watched them again for months and years without seeing and hearing such angelic signs among the stars. How like a dream must all that have seemed after it had passed, — and yet a dream that dropped its charm into all their future waking hours. Looking back through our years some of us may count twice "fourteen" between to-day and the well-remembered religious experiences we might have called visits to the "third heaven." Stretching all the way along the years down to our childhood, we may see even now a

line of summits mounting the blue, where our favored feet rested for a while, and where we saw in the whole encircling horizon only beauty and brightness. They are a recollection now only; but what joy is in the recollection!

"What peaceful hours we once enjoyed;
How sweet their memory still."

XII.

COMMUNION SERMON.

"*Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.*" — JOHN xii. 44, 45.

THE Communion Service before us this morning — what is it, and why is it? We have bread and wine on this table; what is their use, their purpose here, or in any church?

The Communion Service, or Lord's Supper, or Eucharist, whichever it be called, is at least old, — as old as the Christian church, probably; and on this account, if on no other, we will naturally respect the rite. It can hardly be separated from the history of the church. It is associated with our own earliest and latest memories of the church, if not with our holiest experiences in it.

At some time before his crucifixion Jesus sat with his disciples at supper. He knew, if the rest did not, that this was their last supper together. Whether it was a common or a special meal we cannot affirm with certainty. It seems to have been held in a private room. Only the Master and his Twelve were present. It was, in view of all the circumstances, present and future, a momentous occasion. The events to follow colored it with solemnity, intensified its meaning, and magnified its importance. The disciples, it is presumed, understood but little of its significance, and saw nothing of the stream of influences that would henceforth flow from it. It was an affectionate as well as deeply religious scene. John says, "Now before the feast of the passover," Lord's Supper, "when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." He loved his disciples, and they, as much as they could, loved him. They had labored and suffered together; their trials and sorrows had deep-

ened and cemented their mutual attachments. All but one of the Twelve had continued faithful, or as faithful as human infirmities would permit. But the severest test was yet to come. Jesus foresaw, as the rest could not, the terrible conflict which was waiting for them, the crushing weight that was about to fall on their faith, the wild confusion and perplexity into which his death and departure would soon plunge them. That one was sitting there who would prove weak enough to deny, and another wicked enough to betray him, he knew. He distinctly announced to the company his knowledge of the latter act, and severely condemned it, — so severely that the guilty one, though not named nor pointed out, must have inwardly quailed and desired to sink out of sight. Yet he, Jesus, continued to sit and to eat with his betrayer. He has no unnecessary harshness of spirit to exhibit before that company. He has no private insult to avenge. The guilt will soon enough display itself, and the punishment for such perfidy will be awful enough.

"And as they were eating Jesus took bread

and blessed it" — or blessed God — "and brake it and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it."

The evangelists narrate this scene in slightly differing language, but they substantially agree in the most essential parts of it. Paul in referring to it adds the words, "This do ye *in remembrance of me.*"

John says that when the supper was "ended" Jesus rose, "laid aside his garments" — his upper coat — and then "took a towel and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel." Peter, abashed and humbled at such unexpected condescension, and feeling that he should refuse it, said, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" "Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." Peter, attempting to add dignity to his humiliation, replied, with earnestness, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." "Jesus answered him, If I

wash thee not thou hast no part with me." The symbolic purpose of the Saviour's act beginning now to dawn on Peter's mind, he replied, very devoutly, "Not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. I am altogether unclean; wash, Lord, every part of me." To this the Saviour said, with wonderful kindness, "Ye are clean, but not all." All but one, including Peter, Jesus is willing to acquit of any deliberate, intentional wrong. None of them were perfect, but only one in that little band had deceived him, or attempted to do so; only one had carried a traitor's sword under his cloak, and a serpent's sting in his kiss. And "so," the history continues, "after he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, *Know ye what I have done to you?* Ye call me Master and Lord; ye say well; for so I am. If then, your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

"Know ye what I have done to you?" They could know but little then of what this all meant. They saw no more in that Supper

perhaps than in other meals. And this act of washing their feet, though it was unexpected from one so far above them in character, was yet a custom of the country and one they had often witnessed. They understood its ordinary meaning, but not this new and special meaning. The Supper and all that pertained to it was symbolic and set forth lessons so wonderful and subtle that only the unfolding centuries could reveal them. When Christ "took the bread and brake it and gave to his disciples," he "said, Take, eat; *this is my body*." Did the disciples understand this? It is almost strange that they showed no confusion of mind on hearing him speak of the bread as his "body." Paul, in quoting the account, describes Christ as saying, "Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you;" and of the wine, "This cup is the new testament of my blood." If Jesus used these words he could have been more easily comprehended; but even then his language must have seemed vague to the disciple who foresaw so little of what the breaking of his body and the shedding of his blood should signify.

Jesus did not explain his meaning. We infer from other words that he could not. He must wait for the future to explain what he had said and done. "What I do thou knowest not now, but shalt know hereafter."

We may speak very humbly of what we, after almost two thousand years of Christian history know of what he said and did at that Last Supper. We do not forget the interpretation which the Catholic Church gives of that Supper; we do not forget it, but we reject it. We cannot accept the doctrine of Consubstantiation, — the doctrine that the bread was literally Christ's body, that the wine was literally his blood. They represented his body and blood symbolically only. And Christ's washing of the disciples' feet was symbolical also. He did not intend that this act should be repeated in all time literally. The scene was an object lesson on the serving, condescending character of the religion Christ had come to teach. The Christian spirit loves and serves its enemies. It submits to any humiliation that kindness and duty demand.

Now two or three striking things appear

here. We must not fail to notice, first of all, the tender and charitable spirit in which he judges his disciples, all but one of them at least, and the kindly apologies he seems ready to offer in their behalf. And even Judas is not so corrupt, so depraved, so shut out of his heart, that he is not willing to bend and wash his feet. What a sight was this for the historian, the painter, and poet! The betrayed washing his betrayer's feet, doing a servant's service to one who is soon to sell him for a few pieces of silver! Has history elsewhere anything so wonderful to tell us as this? Has any miracle ever been so much a miracle as this? Has the Son of God any other more convincing witness than this to his infallible character and mission?

The Communion Service is, then, history and sentiment combined. It inspires thought as well as devoutness. It is chiefly a memorial service, but it is instructive also. It is not the simple fact of that last meeting we need to remember so much as the things said and done there, as the truth that was taught and the spirit that was shown there. In re-

calling that event and the scenes connected with it, we bring before us a living picture of our Saviour's character, and of the religion he came on earth to establish. So we try at this hour to swing open the door of the past, that light from the past may shine through it and upon us. We look back to learn how to look forward. We remember, that we may act.

I shall not undertake to prove, what perhaps no one can prove, that this Communion Service has come down to us with any positive divine command attached to it; but with or without a command, it has come down to us. It has been observed apparently in all Christian ages, and by nearly all Christian sects. No rite has been more completely woven into Christian thought and practice. Here is one reason for continuing the rite; what reason have we for casting it aside?

One of the first lessons of this service, as already shown, is charity; and hence let us not be so uncharitable as to insist that all Christian people shall reason alike on this subject, — shall feel the same need of this ser-

vice, or discover the same authority for it. It is a form at best; and that some persons may conscientiously, and without serious harm, dispense with it, I can easily believe. It would pain me as much as it could them to cast a suspicion on their mental or moral discernment for not feeling drawn to this table in any particular way. But it can do no harm if I explain as well as I can what this communion signifies to us; and why we are not willing to drop it out of its old and hallowed place in the church.

Let it be observed at the beginning, as one of the signs of this questioning age, that much of the reasoning which looks askance or indifferently at the communion-table, is in many instances bold enough to ask us to explain the need of Christ himself, — of any such Christ, at least, as the communion-table is accustomed to remember. They ask, first, why we do not and cannot go to the Saviour as well without the bread and wine; and then why we cannot go to God as well without the intermediate help of Christ. Doing away with the communion-table does not, of

course, necessarily abolish a belief in the Saviour; and yet the argument is quite apt to run from one to the other, and to leave either when the other is gone.

The service which Christ renders his followers, he himself explained.

He intercepts, by the words of our text, the objection any of his followers might have or any sceptic might urge against his mediatorship, that he himself was an object of worship; that he assumed the place which belongs to God only. He says, "He that believeth in me, believeth not in me, but in him that sent me."

I do not forget that this text has been, and is, interpreted to signify quite the opposite of what I have just suggested; that many able commentators understand Christ to mean that he is God; and that all who see him see God. He does mean, for so he says, that "He that seeth me seeth him that sent me." But he evidently designed to teach in this only that he is the reflection of God; and that they who see him, see God in the sense only of seeing his reflection. If he meant

more than this, why did he say in the sentence before, "He that believeth in me, believeth *not* in me, but in him that sent me." That is, "though I have come to reveal God, to represent him, reflect him, I am *not* God." You, my followers, are to worship God, not me. God sent me; and what I do and say are evidence that he sent me. You are to look not at me, but beyond and above me.

We do not sufficiently realize, perhaps, that everything we see is but a shadow of the unseen. That out of which all things come, in which and by which all things live, is invisible. All visible things are symbols of the invisible.

The question is often plausibly raised, if we cannot find our way direct to God by our thoughts and by our prayers, without mediators of any kind, physical or spiritual. Instead of looking into the face of Christ, can we not lift our eyes at once higher than Christ? Instead of asking for blessings in "Christ's name" or "through Christ," may we not ask of God directly? We can. We do look up to God; we do ask of him directly.

But let us think a moment and consider how much of our knowledge of God comes through his works. Remove all visible objects from our sight, the skies, the sun and stars, the fields, trees, seas, rivers, flowers, and human faces, and we should know very little of God compared with what we know now. The first worship was, it is presumed, a worship of Nature. By and by the human mind had grown so much that it believed, not in the sun and stars and flowers and animals, but in the unseen Power which created them. The human face is not the human soul, but its mask only. The soul looks out through a window of flesh and is seen through the same. What is the whole world but shadows and symbols, — and yet shadows and symbols of God? We go to the Old World to visit picture-galleries, and what do we see? Only shadows. The Sistine Madonna is only a reflection in the mirror of colors. Angelo's marbles are but symbols. We believe in the paintings and in the marbles, — and yet not in these, but in the artists who made them, and the objects they express. Does one ask

why we do not go in our admiration to Raphael and Angelo at once, without the aid of their works? Because we know nothing of them aside from their works. We commune with them through canvas and stone, or color and form. So with all the arts; they please and educate the mind through material mediums. What is music as we know it but the echo of voices behind it? We hear the flute, the organ, the song of the bird, of the wind, of the ocean-wave, of the brook, and of the human voice, — and yet not the flute, nor the organ, nor the wind, nor the ocean-wave, nor the brook, nor the voice, but something back in the great soul of music, of which these are but the instruments. But why not dispense with the instrument and place our ear to the primal soul of music itself? This we would do if we could.

What is poetry but a rhythmical form of thought, but a beautiful expression of beauty out of sight, but ideal paintings lifted between us and the things from which imagination has copied them? We believe in written poetry, and yet not in written poetry

but in that something which, hidden in mystery, casts these lovely images before us.

All seeing and hearing and teaching, then, except it be the very highest, reaches us at second hand. All communion, except it be the very highest, deals in symbols. Jesus, therefore, in explaining his relation to us, his mediatorship, touched a universal law. "He that believeth in me believeth *not* in me, but in him that sent me." If our country sends an ambassador to England, the attention and honor he receives, he receives not for himself alone, nor chiefly, but for the government he represents. To accept or to reject him is to accept or reject, not him, but the power in whose name he acts. So the honor given to Christ is honor given God who sent him. "Ye believe in God," he said on another occasion, "believe also in me." Here he reverses the argument by saying, "He that seeth me seeth him that sent me."

What was Christ sent into the world for? If it be proper to ask so great a question and to attempt to answer it, we may venture to say that the chief purpose of his mission here

was to help the world to a knowledge of God, and in this way to save the world from sin. And a knowledge of God comes best of all, of course, through whatever is most like God, that is the truest, noblest reflection of him. All persons must concede, the most sceptical as well as most believing, that the way to study God is to study his works. But what works? The earth, sun and moon and stars, trees and flowers? Yes, all these; but what else? Is there anything the eye can see, or the mind can study so much like God as a good man? And of all good men the world has known was not Christ the best? Let it be granted, then, that he was a man and nothing more; a good man, a pure, noble, righteous man, a man worthy of universal love and honor; let it be granted for the moment that he was this and nothing more; is there not reason enough in that case, even, for remembering him? Is there not reason enough in that case to suppose him capable of showing us and telling us more of God than can any person on earth? What other work of God is so beautiful, so perfect,

so wonderful, as Christ? What work, then, if we wish a knowledge of God, had we better study than Christ?

But we believe that Christ was more than a man, — that he was especially and exceptionally the Son of God; a divine Man; not God, but God manifest in the flesh; a man, but one so near God, so much like God as to render it easy to mistake him at times for God, as not to make it blasphemy to call him God and to believe he is God, as millions of conscientious Christians have felt and still feel compelled to do. We see too much of God in him to class him with men, to speak of him and think of him as a man only. The office and power assigned him by the New Testament are higher certainly than could ever have been, or can ever be, intrusted to man. But Jesus himself, as we read his life and words, resisted every tendency to bestow on him the homage which belonged to his Father and all men's Father. He himself said, in these plain words, "*My Father is greater than I.*" "My doctrine," he says, "is not mine but his that *sent* me." "I must

work the works of him that *sent* me." "I came down from heaven not to do my *own* will, but the will of him that *sent* me."

Jesus is our mediator. Paul says, "For there is *one* God, and one mediator between God and men, the *man* Christ Jesus." There is enough of God in Christ to invest him with divine authority, to render him infallible, to constitute him a perfect Example, Leader, and Saviour of the world. And there is enough of man in him to bring him into sympathy with mankind, to cause him to feel and to understand all the needs and struggles and temptations and sufferings of mankind. God is just as near us as Christ is. He knows our wants and hears our prayers as well. We do not need a mediator because God is distant or indifferent. But our Father can better make himself known to us through Christ; and we can see and know God better through Christ.

We get nearest the infinite soul of music through the sweetest music sent to us through organ-pipes or harp-strings or piano-keys or human voices. The strongest proof of divine

Goodness is the highest human goodness found on earth. The innocence that flowers in a child's face suggests a divine innocence. It is the love of our friends, of our parents, of husband, wife, child, brother, sister, neighbor, that helps us to believe in the love of God. The best proof of all — I do not say the only proof, but the best proof — of God is Christ. Seeing the Son is seeing the Father.

If, then, beauty is revealed to us through art, music through the musician, poetry through the poet, love through one who loves, why should we question the help of Christ, whose purity and wisdom and nearness to God, as well as nearness to man, make it possible for him to reveal the highest spiritual truths to us?

"In the cross of Christ I glory,"

sings the poet. But why should one glory in the cross? It is a piece of wood. Yes, and so the flag of our country is a piece of cloth. But this piece of cloth, with its stars and stripes and floating in the breeze, is a symbol of liberty, of our country and of our country's

institutions. To love it is to love our country; to insult it is to insult our country. We believe in the cross, and yet not in the cross but in him who died on it; in the religion for which it stands.

The bread and wine on this table — what are they? They are shadows and symbols of great religious truths. The symbols are nothing except as they help us to remember and to live the truths. There is nothing strange or superstitious in this service. We believe in the bread and wine? Yes, and yet not in them, but in the life and character and teachings of him whom they recall. We eat the bread, and yet not that, but spiritual bread; we drink the wine, yet not that, but the wine of truth.

THE END.

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